NOVEMBER 13, 1934

New Masses

Who Paid Viola Ilma?

Seventh Article in a Series

PLOTTING AMERICA'S POGROMS

By JOHN L. SPIVAK

A Hunger Marcher Reports

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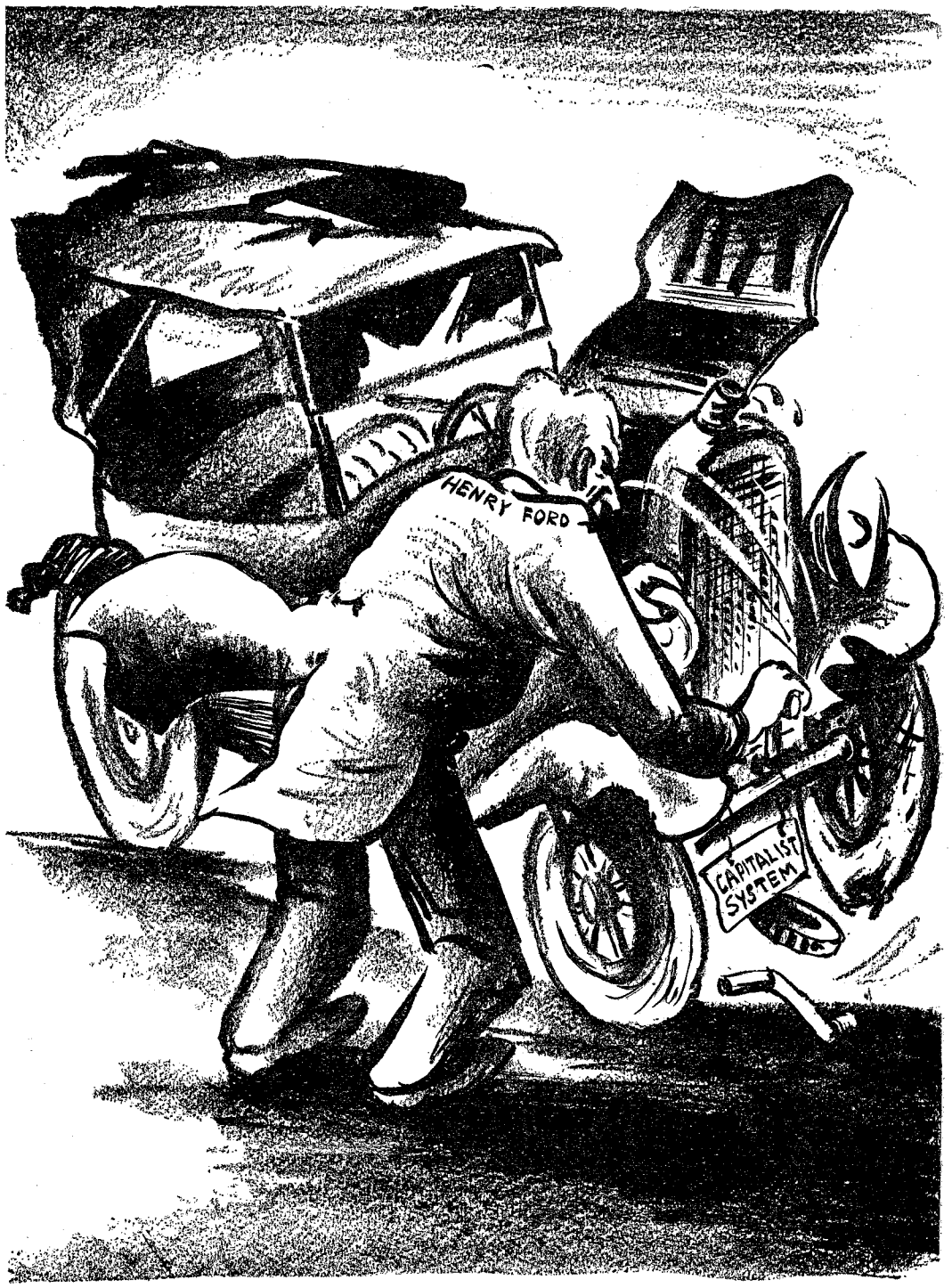
new Masses

NOVEMBER 13, 1934

THE Democratic sweep in the elections reveals the people as still hopeful that Roosevelt can and will "do something" for them. The demagogue in the White House, having put forward Gen. Johnson to bear the brunt of attacks on the New Deal, and having duly sacrificed him, retains his hold on the masses undiminished. Now he has Richberg as the "front man" and ultimate scapegoat. He has two-thirds of both houses; New York state solidly Democratic in both branches of the legislature; Pennsylvania Democratic for the first time since the Civil War; in all, probably a stronger political position than any president since the first Roosevelt. He also has the prospect of a winter of intensified misery for twenty millions, utter inability of the broken-down capitalist machine to start moving again, unemployment increasing as even the reactionary Green admits—and a newly made compact with the bankers, to defend, uphold and maintain the profit system which has brought about the crisis.

SUGGESTIONS are to be expected from now on that the Republican Party is "dead." The Republican Party is not dead because capitalism in the United States is loath to surrender a political system that has served it so well in the past. The two-party system has succeeded in directing the anger of the workers and middle-classes against one and the other by turns. But, though the Republican Party is not dead, indications are numerous that it is dying. 1934 is not 1920, 1924 or 1928 when the demise of the other capitalist party, the Democratic Party, was announced. The current crisis is more stubborn than any in capitalism's history: world economy has passed into a stage of chronic depression. Hence, the signs of disintegration in the Republican camp. Although one must not, of course, venture to predict the complete disappearance of the G. O. P. from the American political scene by the next elections, we can expect that the two-party system will perforce be amended to include all the combinations and permutations toward the left—the Epic, the "Progressive," the Farmer-Labor, the Labor parties. Already the right-wingers of the Socialist Party are reported to be making overtures to the American Federation of Labor for the formation of a "Labor" Party modelled along British lines.



"RUN IT WITH GOOD SOUND AMERICAN COMMON SENSE" *Limbach*

"IT is to make Communism both unnecessary and impossible that we want to see vigorous action for Socialism." This statement sounds like a sentence from some secret capitalist letter, in pre-Hitler Germany, calling upon bankers and employers to support Social-Democracy as a buffer against Communism. Such tactics have certainly not been unknown to capitalist rulers in their fear of a rising militant working-class movement. But this particular pronouncement comes not from the capitalists—at least, not directly. It is the concluding sentence of a letter to the New York Times by Norman Thomas, leader of the "militant" and "left-wing" element in the Socialist Party. He does not insist on building a vigorous Socialist movement in order to wipe out capitalism and build a classless society. Possibly "leaders" like Thomas dream of such things in off moments. Nor do they advocate a strengthened Socialist Party in order to prevent war and Fascism, though occasionally this comes to their minds. It is because of the growing movement of the Socialist rank and file for the united front with the Communists that they are frantic, "to make Communism . . . impossible." Their followers, desiring to prevent war and Fascism, seek to build a base of common

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action with the Communists. The leaders, desiring to prevent Communism, find it necessary to sabotage the struggle against war and Fascism since in this struggle the Communists lead. The so-called "left" Socialists, like Thomas, claim they hate capitalism but they fear Communism more. Thomas himself says in this same letter: "Indeed, at no time have we been stronger in our disapproval of some of the tendencies manifested by Communism all over the world." (Note that he includes the Soviet Union as well as the Communist parties in the imperialist and colonial countries.) Thomas desires to build up what he calls "an inclusive party." His whole statement makes the conclusion unavoidable that this party is to *include all discontented elements* who wish to make a common front against Communism.

ON November 11, 1918, millions of soldiers, workingmen, starving children, the weary and harassed populations of nearly every country, went wild with joy. The ringing of bells and shrieking of sirens meant to them that the war to end war had ended. The world would enjoy enduring peace. Huge armies were demobilized and sent home. But was there peace? In 1919 Armistice Day witnessed a Spanish War against the Riffs in North Africa, the intervention of Poland and the border states against Soviet Russia, and invasion of Soviet Hungary by Czechs, Rumanians and South Slavs. In 1920 Poland occupied Vilna, and the Allied intervention against Soviet Russia continued. On Armistice Day, 1921, two wars going on: the Greek-Turkish War, and the British War against the Wahabites in Arabia. In 1922, Japan was fighting in Siberia for Vladivostok, and Ireland was fighting England. On November 11, 1925-26, the French were fighting the Jebel Druses in Syria, and the Spanish-French were engaged in a punitive expedition in North Africa. The British were still "punishing" the Wahabites. From 1927 to 1934 there were seven expeditions against Soviet China, and in 1930 and 1931 French and British colonial wars in India. The more recent conflicts are too fresh in the memory to need reciting. There have been 30 military actions in 15 years.

THIS year, Armistice Day, 1934, the potential causes of a world war are overwhelmingly present. The national war preparation budgets show increases in percentages over 1913: France, 25; Italy, 26; Great Britain, 48; United States, 190; Japan, 388. A pre-war psychology has gripped the whole capitalist world. As Lenin wrote, at the time of the last World War: "There is and there can be no other way of testing the real strength of a capitalist state than that of war. War does not contradict the principles of private property—on the contrary, it is a direct and inevitable development of those principles. Under capitalism, the even economic growth of individual enterprises, or individual states, is impossible. Under capitalism, there is nothing else that periodically restores the disturbed equilibrium except *crises* in industry and *wars* in politics." The only hope of deliverance from the curse of imperialist wars lies in transforming them into civil wars when they occur, into mass uprising of the populations who are the victims in war, and the establishment of dictatorships of the proletariat.

THE office workers in the Macaulay Publishing Company, who walked out ten weeks ago, are still on strike despite the fact that the New York Labor Board granted the strikers' demand in recommending the reinstatement of the discharged union employes. This decision is supposed to be implemented by Public Resolution No. 44, the purpose of which was to extend the application of Section 7A to union members in uncodified industries. But the Furman brothers — following the example of Weirton, Houde, and other large industrialists—coolly ignored the "recommendation . . ." In a final attempt to get action, the Macaulay strikers, accompanied by a committee of writers, went to Washington on November 2. H. A. Millis, Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, told them that the Board could do nothing to make the reinstatements effective, because it was "not clear in its own mind" as to whether Resolution 44 can be enforced. Mr. Millis could not prophesy when the mind of the Board would be clarified. It appeared that Mr. Magruder, counsel for the Board, was conferring with certain persons undisclosed.

THE strikers then called on President Roosevelt to obtain replies to two questions: (1) What protection does the President intend to offer workers who join unions under the impression given them by the N.R.A. that such is their lawful right, only to discover that they have lost their livelihood by doing so? (2) What measure will the Department of Justice take to enforce Labor Board decisions favorable to strikers when employers refuse to accept these decisions? The answer they got from Marvin McIntyre, Roosevelt's secretary, was that the President could do nothing until all the government agencies for labor disputes had been exhausted. "Don't cross your bridges until you come to them," cheerfully advised Mr. McIntyre. But the Macaulay strikers are not crossing bridges; they are swimming in midstream, jobless. The Office Workers' Union, of course, is carrying on this struggle which has particular significance. The Macaulay strikers have performed a service for thousands of white collar workers and workers in uncodified industries because they have invoked Public Resolution 44 for the first time and by doing so have blasted another New Deal illusion.

NO one was so surprised by the sweeping victory of the English Labor Party in the recent municipal and county elections as the English laborites themselves. In an article obviously written before the elections, H. N. Brailsford, a laborite, assured the readers of The New Republic (November 7) that "few sober observers imagine that it (the Labor Party) can achieve an absolute or even a relative majority at the next elections." The "sober" observers were, it seems, a little too sober. Actually, the British Labor Party, though unexpectedly and through no fault of its own, has won a colossal victory. Out of a total of 1,300 municipal and county seats, Labor won 740—an absolute majority, and 500 more than it held previously! In the city of London it now controls 15 out of a total of 28 districts. It has also won a majority of seats in 41 other cities. Though the Labor Party's chief gains have been made at the expense of the Conservatives, the liberals too have contributed their toll.

ON the eve of the nominations, the Communist Party of Great Britain, for the first time in its history, deliberately withdrew a number of its candidates to ensure the election of some laborites. It even expressed its readiness wholeheartedly to support and work for the return of Labor candidates in places where there were no Communist candidates, "providing that such candidates would pledge themselves to

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fight on such questions as forced labor schemes, for lower rents, refusal to operate the means test, extra winter relief, withdrawal of the Sedition Bill, against the unemployment act, and for the united front. . . ." In a statement explaining this action, the Communist Party made it quite clear, however, that by taking this new step it was not abandoning its own political line nor giving tacit approval to the utterly inadequate, purely reformist program of the Labor Party. Its sole aim, it declared, was the strengthening of the united front struggle against the growing menace of war and Fascism as illustrated by events on the European continent. "It is clear," the Communist statement said, "that these events necessitate the building of a united front, and this is now the paramount urgent consideration overriding every other question facing the working-class. . . . Municipal elections are not something apart from the class struggle, having only a passing significance; they occur at the very moment when the British working-class can show it has learned from Germany, Austria, and Spain, when they can give a mighty demonstration to the workers of the world that they are also building unity in action and taking steps to organize their forces for an advance against the capitalist enemy."

ONE need not, however, exaggerate the importance of the Labor Party's victory as "an advance against the capitalist enemy." Certainly, Brailsford is no Bolshevik, yet even he maintains that the Labor Party's leaders "are still the old gradualist, reformist team." He questions whether Herbert Morrison, the ablest of the Labor Party chieftains, "aims at much more than the introduction of order and efficiency into capitalism." In speaking of his Party proper, Brailsford admits that "its organization, its composition, its discipline, its habits of thought in many ways painfully resemble those of the German Social Democrats. Its real interest probably is centered still in housing, the relief of unemployment and the preservation of peace—attainable goods, or so it supposes, that can be won with no very heroic effort." Pressed from below, the leaders do occasionally make a pretense at revolutionism. Yet more often than not their socialization programs bear a "dread resemblance to the corporative state," i.e. Fascism. There is no suggestion of creating workers' control over the few industries which they do propose to socialize. The younger, more efficient, and most profitable industries —electrical manufacture, motors, and chemicals—do not enter into their socialization programs. Furthermore, even those industries which the laborites propose to socialize, they intend to pay for in full: they "aim at returning to the present owners the full capital value of their property—that means an eternity of tribute." Small wonder, the leaders are surprised by their victory. They have done nothing to merit it, and Mr. Lansbury, one of the aged leaders, is quite right in ascribing the victory of his Party, not to the latter's positive achievements and revolutionary program, but to the general disgust of the masses with the reactionary national government. Hatred of Fascism has brought the working masses to the support of the Labor Party; the urge toward Socialism will bring them to the Communist Party. This is the next, the inevitable stage.

THE most gratifying way we know of celebrating a Soviet anniversary is a careful perusal of Soviet graphs and figures. No oratory, no rhetoric, no poetry can convey the grandeur of the proletarian revolution and socialist construction as can the simple matter-of-fact statements of Soviet arithmetic. Industrial production for the first six months of 1934 amounted to 17.8 billion rubles, an increase of 19.7 percent over the corresponding period of 1933. The Commissariat of Heavy Industry increased its production by 29.3 percent; the Commissariat for Internal Supplies by 23.3 percent; the Committee for Procurements by 25.4. The least gains, in the first six months of 1934, were shown by the Commissariats for Light Industry (3 percent) and Lumber (8.6 percent). During the same period of six months the number of workers in large-scale heavy industries increased 103 percent. Output per worker showed a gain of 16.8 percent. Especially large gains in volume of output were recorded for coke (43.4 percent), pig iron (54.7), steel (48.4), copper (67.4), aluminum (530), gold (50), passenger autos (23 percent). Output of the machinery industries as a whole increased 27 percent. Oil output for the first six months of the year reached a total of 11,845,300 tons, of which 10,381,800 tons were refined —a gain of 14.9 percent over 1933. Production of gasoline for the same period totaled 1,378,900 tons, as against 1,319,500 tons last year. Kerosene out-

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put amounted to 2,129,800 tons as compared with 1,875,300 in the first six months of 1933. Drilling operations increased by 75 percent. Several branches of light industries overfulfilled their schedules: the woolen and printing industries carried out 102.7 percent each, the hemp-jute industry—107.4; the tanning extract industry—103.9; the office supplies industry—100.5. Altogether, however, the Light Industries carried out only 96.2 percent of their program during the first six months of this year. This was in large measure due to the lagging behind of the porcelain industry (fulfilling only 70.7 percent of its plan), the glass industry (83.6), musical instruments (75.5) and the clothing industry (91.2 percent). The production of meat increased 9.5 percent; fish—2.4; vegetable oils—35; soap—73.9; butter—12.7; confectionery—21.7; cigarettes—2.9; dairy products as a whole—75.4; macaroni—65.4; granulated sugar—104.4; refined sugar—81.1 percent. The retail trade turnover of the Commissariat for Internal Supply increased by 47.5 percent.

MORE recent figures show the same general trend. On November 3, the New York Times carried a dispatch from Moscow that the Soviet Union will be second only to the United States in output of pig iron this year. Besides dislodging Germany from the second position in the production of pig iron, the Soviets are nosing out Great Britain from her position as third producer of steel and rolled metal. The Bolshevik slogan to overtake and surpass the most advanced capitalist countries begins to seem not quite so "fantastic" as it appeared only a few years ago. In 1935 the workers' and peasants' republic expects to rank second to the United States alone in all three lines of metal production. Add to this the tremendous gains in the realm of culture; and to this again, the triumphs in international relations during the past twelve months, and you have a record of achievements unparalleled even in the unparalleled history of the Soviets.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 31—Gov. Lehman, deluged with protests at brutal treatment of Albany Hunger Marchers, claims he has "no jurisdiction" over Albany police. . . . Federal Relief Administrator Hopkins, decrying "politics," makes the front page five days before election by telling how "I am feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and sheltering the destitute, regardless of their sex, age, creed, color, race or place of residence." . . . N.R.A. provisions held unconstitutional by Alabama Judge in dismissal of code violation case against lumber company. . . . Roosevelt latest "consolidation of power" move, makes Richberg "boss" of Cabinet in new position as head of Emergency Council. . . . President announces restoration of latest 5 percent Federal pay cuts effective July 1 next, backing prediction of rise in living costs. . . . Unionization drive in chain grocery stores spreads to James Butler's with 665 stores in East.

Thursday—Hunger Marchers' delegates open convention in Albany, while Gov. Lehman refuses to free those in jail. . . . A. & P. strike still unsettled. . . . Butler, head of Eastern chain, refuses to deal with union group demanding 25 percent wage increase, improved working conditions and union recognition. . . . Henry Ford says "the depression is over for the Ford Co." and announces an annual increase in output to 1,000,000 cars. . . . Harvard suspects Yale in theft of whole issue of "Lampoon." . . . Bishop Mueller still hanging on to his Nazi job, but may have to resign this week. . . . Radical Socialist members of French Cabinet threaten resignation over proposed constitutional reform. . . . Automobile manufacturers threaten to let code lapse—stall for 90 day extension "as is" without any concessions to labor. . . . Third big strike of week ties up 400 New York buildings as service men walk out.

Friday — National Labor Relations Board, in its "peace proposal" for settling A. & P. Cleveland strike, takes strong anti-unionization position. . . . National Association of Manufacturers lines up anti-trade union legislation platform which it urges all state legislatures to pass on. Object—kill clause 7A. . . . American girl and boy seized in Germany, stripped, searched, questioned for seven hours; girl's New York mother belittles report and praises Nazis as being "so nice to everyone." . . . Two Communist leaders arrested in Hungary; one "commits suicide" while being "questioned." . . . Japan stands pat in demand for naval equality, bringing Great Britain and U.S. to a "united front." . . . Nazis order German score for *Midsummer Night's Dream* to replace Mendelssohn's "Jewish music." . . . British Laborites sweep municipal elections, winning control of 15 out of 28 boroughs. . . . Chain Store Union complains to National Labor Relations Board, charging Butler refused to negotiate with union heads, dismissed union employes. . . . Eighteen City College of N. Y. students picketing home of President Frederick B. Robinson, demanding his resignation, arrested. . . . Jailed Hunger Marchers freed in Albany, testify to terrific beatings by police. . . . Roosevelt, without promised public hearing, extends auto code, including the notorious "merit clause," to Feb. 1 (production peak season).

Saturday—8,000 striking New York elevator operators go back to work with settlement providing temporary blanket wage increases pending arbitration. . . . A. & P. Cleveland strike settled, with stores to reopen, with recognition won by union.

Sunday—French Cabinet still facing "pro Fascist" constitutional changes. . . . Japan firm over Manchukuo oil monopoly, with Japanese press charging coincidence of "open door" and "naval parity" discussions is Anglo-American plot to intimidate Japan. . . . A.F. of L. tells workers to fight own battles without depending on either the Government or N.R.A. . . . Gorman, vice-president of Textile Workers Union, offers George Sloan, of employers' association, cooperation of workers "in a movement to expand domestic and foreign markets for textiles" and creation of a "joint council." . . . Eighteen smuggled Chinese, unable to pay smugglers' fee of $1,000, captured in New Jersey raid. Chinese aliens able to pay fees, work for 20 cents a day, as "slaves" in laundries. . . . A.A.A. report predicts 800,000,000 bushel wheat crop in 1935.

Monday—Government deficit in first

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20 months of New Deal totals $5,600,000. . . . League of Nations questions Japanese fortification of Pacific islands and receives for its pains a denunciation by Tokyo of these "press rumors." . . . Japan planning new-type "pocket" battleships if Washington Naval Treaty expires. . . . Supreme Court, ordering Huey P. Long to stand trial in $500,000 libel suit, rules he is not "immune." . . . Fourteen N. Y. C. elevators, "unfit" to be replaced by P.W.A. fund of $1,750,000. . . . Four hundred strike guards "imported" to maintain "order" during N. Y. C. elevator strike, turn tables by demanding immediate pay. . . . New "business group" formed to "advise" New Deal executives how to "end depression and maintain private property."

Tuesday — Huey P. Long, in radio speech, asks Louisiana to secede from the Union as only way to "get out of this here depression." . . . Paterson Dyers reject N.R.A. Board arbitration as "bluff." . . . National Labor Relations Board gives labor a break; hereafter, it rules, employers must assent to workers' demands — if "satisfactory." . . . New York City neglecting its chronic sick, charges Welfare Council. . . . In Toledo, 200 unemployed single men follow six day "death march" by storming County Court House. . . . Herriot and five other Radical Socialist members of French Cabinet announce they'll resign if Doumergue asks for vote of confidence on his Fascist proposals.

THERE WAS "I" WAITING AT THE CHURCH — *Limbach*

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Plotting the American Pogroms

7. Who Paid Viola Ilma's Way to Nazi Germany?

JOHN L. SPIVAK

THE TRAIL of Hitler agents in this country does not always lead to direct anti-semitic activities. Anti-semitism is only one phase of German Fascism. It was essential to Hitler as an excuse for the disintegration of Germany's economic life against which the people were on the point of rebelling. Hence Fascism, especially in a country where there are millions of Jews, carries within itself the germs of anti-semitism.

In the fight against the persecution of national and racial minorities, of which anti-semitism is one manifestation, it is important to examine any possible Fascist organization and determine, if possible, whether such organizations could possibly be Nazi-inspired. And this leads us to the now nationally known Youth Movement headed by Viola Ilma and the much-publicized Youth Congress held at New York University this summer. An examination of the activities of Miss Ilma, which attracted and still attract national attention, reveals some very startling facts which Miss Ilma kept secret.

The Youth Congress was held this August. It was the first attempt "at national unity on the part of American Youth." The press gave it a great deal of space. There were a great many feature stories about the young and charming founder, Viola Ilma of New York, Washington, London, Geneva, Berlin and other points. What the delegates, the newspapers and her members did not know is that Miss Ilma, born in Germany, is not even sure that she is a citizen, that the Youth Congress was called after she had made a trip to Germany where she saw high Nazi officials and where she got the money for her jaunt abroad. Maybe, when the reader finishes this article, he will know a little more about the activities of the founder of this movement.

The conference Miss Ilma called eventually broke up. Radical and liberal groups smelled Fascism, organized an opposition and took the Congress completely away from Miss Ilma.

Miss Ilma today is moving in the highest political circles of the land—the same Miss Ilma who in an address before a woman's club in Paris on her way from Berlin stated: "Hitler is bigger than any politician I have ever known," and who in private conversations defended Hitler's treatment of the Jews.

Before we touch on the matters which this young lady has tried to keep secret I think we can accept as a truism that if her proposed movement were successful—and she has a large following—her organization could function as Hitler's Youth functioned in Germany shortly before he took power. And if, in the course of our examination of this young lady, we find her conferring with Nazi officials, then it would be reasonable to assume that Miss Ilma might be influenced by their suggestions.

Before Miss Ilma organized the Youth Congress she took a trip to Germany. And from then on we come to matters which the young lady found extremely embarrassing when questioned. Miss Ilma had been broke. She never had much money. Nevertheless on September 7, 1933, she sailed for Germany on the Hamburg-American ship, New York. We will come to the question of who paid her fare and her expenses abroad. At the moment, it is necessary to say only that she carried with her two letters of introduction to bitter anti-semites.

With this in mind let us call upon her in the modest apartment at 103 W. 88th St., New York, where she lives with her parents.

"You have no money," I said. "Yet you travel and eat. May I ask, from whom do you get your backing to organize this movement?"

Miss Ilma evaded the question, telling me at length about her hopes of solidifying the various youth movements in the country, the Congress she had called. Finally I asked again.

"Where did you get the money to carry on your work?"

"I got $500 from Arthur Garfield Hays, Anne Morgan and Christopher Morley," she said finally. "These people had given me money for my magazine Modern Youth which finally went under. I raised about $1,500 for the Congress and there were some $300 left over."

"That was in August. You have to live. Where did you get money since then?"

"There seems to be a great mystery about where I get money. There isn't any," she said petulantly. "I can get money whenever I need it. From my father or mother." Her parents are music teachers and judging from their very modest apartment, not very well-to-do.

"How much money do you need?"

"Well, one of the things I need is $150,000 to start another magazine."

"You've been traveling around a great deal recently. Where did you get the money for that?"

Again she was evasive. Then she said: "I told you I had $300 left from the Congress. I used that."

"All of your activities are actuated by a patriotic desire to do something for American youth?"

"That and only that," she assured me.

"I see. Are you an American citizen?"

"Certainly!" she said with a note of indignation.

"Born here?" I continued.

"No, I was born in Mainz, Germany. I was three years old when I came here."

"Is your father a citizen?"

"No, my father is a Swiss citizen, but my mother is an American. Born in New York. But I am a citizen."

"If your father is a Swiss citizen then you must have gotten naturalization papers?"

"Why do you ask me that? What has that to do with the movement?" she exclaimed irritably.

"Nothing except that you said you were actuated by patriotism yet you are not even a citizen. Didn't Arthur Garfield Hays try to get you naturalization papers?"

"No, he did not!" she said sharply.

"Oh, I'm sorry. He told me he did."

"Arthur said that! Well—yes, he got them for me—in 1931 or '32."

"Hays says that he was unsuccessful in getting them for you," I said quietly.

"Arthur did!" she exclaimed again. "I can't understand that."

"Then you are an alien?"

"The status is still—the whole question is—there is no answer one way or the other at the moment," she floundered. "It's one of those damned situations that's all involved.

"I was afraid that one day this would come up. That's why I was in Washington. I saw all the papers. Must this come out?"

"I don't see how it can be avoided. You are a public figure, actuated only by patriotism. You are twenty-four years old now and only since you returned from Germany did you suddenly try to get your citizenship status established——"

"It would be God damned lousy for me just now if it came out," she volunteered glumly.

"Why did you tell me you were a citizen?"

"Oh," she moved restlessly in her seat. "Don't you understand? I didn't want it to come out."

"Yes, I guessed as much."

"Look here!" she leaned towards me, her really attractive eyes almost welling with tears. "If you publish this you'll just crack up the whole thing I've been working for. Thank God my father was not born in Germany or the whole thing would look lousier than it already looks. But—I don't see why it is necessary to publish that I am an alien."

"It wouldn't be, normally. I assure you I

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have no desire to hurt you needlessly. Before I finish asking you these questions, perhaps you will understand why it is necessary to publish the fact that you are an alien, born in Germany and sailing under a Swiss passport. But let us get on with your trip to Germany. What was the object of the trip and who paid your expenses?"

"I went to Geneva. I'll tell you exactly where I went. I went first to London, then I went to Paris, Geneva, Berlin, back to Geneva, Paris, London and home. All in a couple of weeks. I was in Germany all told about eight days. Do you know that Arthur Garfield Hays was there when I was?"

"Yes, I know," I assured her. "But who paid your expenses? You had no money."

"My expenses were paid by the New History Society," she said.

"How much money did they give you?"

"I say they sent me. That's all I have to say."

"Did they give you any money at all?"

"I don't wish to——" she caught herself and concluded swiftly, "They sent me abroad. That's all I have to say on that."

"Now, Miss Ilma, isn't it a fact that your expenses abroad were paid by the Nazi government?"

The founder of the Youth Movement jumped to her feet.

"That's a God damned lie!" she shrieked. "Absolutely no! I don't know anybody in the German government. I once had a few minutes' interview with Hanfstaengl——"

"Yes, I know," I said soothingly.

"Why, if you went to the German Consulate they wouldn't even know my name. Have you gone there?" she asked quickly.

"No, I haven't. It wasn't necessary. Now, when you were in Germany you say you saw Hanfstaengl? Didn't you also meet Goebbels, the minister of propaganda?"

"I met Goebbels in Geneva."

"How did you get to him?"

"I didn't get to him. I just went in during a press conference like I go into press conferences in Washington."

"You said you met Hanfstaengl once. Didn't you meet him more than once?"

"I met him twice," she said.

"How did you get to Hanfstaengl?"

"I got to Putzy through a friend. He gave me a letter of introduction."

"What was this friend's name?"

"That isn't necessary."

"Why don't you want to give me this friend's name?"

"There's no why—people—there's no answer to it," she floundered again.

"Was the person who gave you the letter of introduction connected with the German government? Is that why you don't want to mention his name?"

"No! Absolutely no!" she exclaimed. She rose to her feet and started pacing the small room. "He has no connection whatever with the German government."

"Has he ever had any connection with the German government?"

Proof That Easley Knew the Character Of the Anti-Semitic Book He Distributed

IN A LETTER to John L. Spivak, which we published last week, Archibald E. Stevenson, counsel of the National Civic Federation, threatened a libel suit if any intimation were made that Ralph M. Easley, head of the Civic Federation, had engaged in anti-semitic work. Spivak's article last week dealt fully with the anti-semitic book, Communism in Germany, *by Dr. Adolph Ehrt, which the Nazi agent George Sylvester Viereck imported into this country and which Easley pushed very hard. So important did Easley consider this book that he tried to get prominent Jews to indorse it. One of those approached was Joseph M. Proskauer, former Supreme Court Justice of New York. Judge Proskauer's refusal was told in last week's issue, but there was no room for his letters on the subject. We print these documents herewith, proving that Ralph M. Easley was fully aware of the anti-semitic character of the book he was distributing.*

October 27, 1933.

Gen. John Ross Delafield,
20 Exchange Place,
New York City.

Dear General Delafield:

Some time ago Mr. Waldman, of the American Jewish Committee, sent me a confidential letter to him from Mr. Easley, in which it was stated that it was suggested by you and Congressman Hamilton Fish that I might be asked to sign the Foreword with respect to the publication in America of Dr. Adolf Ehrt's book on Communism.

I need hardly say to you that I am no Communist, but that the National Civic Federation should be misled into giving the stamp of its approval on this particular work is to me incredible. The book in question is undoubtedly a piece of special propaganda in the present Anti-Semitic movement in Germany. If you have any doubt on this subject, I wish you would ask Mr. Easley to send you a copy of Mr. Waldman's letter to him dated October 18th. No organization can sponsor a book containing such statements as are quoted in Mr. Waldman's letter without becoming responsible for a definite Anti-Semitic propaganda, and that responsibility cannot be evaded by a mere statement that the book has nothing to do with Anti-Semitism.

I very earnestly trust that the National Civic Federation, in which I have a deep interest, will not make any such mis-step.

With kindest regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER.

November 1, 1933.

Ralph M. Easley, Esq.,
570 Lexington Ave.,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Easley:

The office of the American Jewish Committee has, in the absence of Mr. Waldman, called my attention to your correspondence with him regarding Dr. Ehrt's book.

Any book, which directly and by innuendo, identifies Jews and Communists, is an anti-Semitic book. That is the essence of this situation. The rest of it is embroidery.

In order to fight Communism, in which task I am with you, there is no occasion for exalting Hitlerism and publishing a book which apparently misses no opportunity to emphasize the chance coincidence that a particular Communist happened to be a Jew.

I sincerely trust that this project will be abandoned.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER.

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"No!" She turned on me fiercely. "His name does not matter——"

"But it does," I assured her. "Especially if he is a man who at one time went to prison when he was generally suspected of being a German agent."

She paused in her restless steps.

"What—what do you mean?"

"I mean that the man who gave you the letter of introduction was Edward Aloysius Rumley who was indicted with two of Arthur Garfield Hays' partners, during the World War in connection with the New York Evening Mail scandal. Certainly you must have heard the talk of his being a German agent. You did, didn't you?

"He gave you the letter, didn't he?"

"Yes," she admitted slowly.

"And he gave you another letter to Baron von Schmidt-Pauli, one of propaganda minister Goebbels' chief associates. Those letters said that you should be shown every consideration and that interviews should be arranged for you with Hitler, Goering and Goebbels—that you were an important American journalist who, upon your return would be of great help in acquainting the United States with the true character of Germany. Now, why did you try to keep Rumley's name out of this?"

"I didn't want to get him involved because he is connected with the Committee for the Nation."

"You know, of course, that Rumley is secretary of the Committee for the Nation. Nevertheless his name does not appear on the letterheads.

"You know, too, that Rumley's organization has been advocating devaluation of the American dollar, carrying on tremendous propaganda for it, and that the chief gainer of this devaluation is the German government which has the largest floating debt in this country?"

Miss Ilma shook her head.

"Why did you try to keep his name out as the one who gave you the letters of introduction?"

"Did Arthur tell you that?" she demanded angrily. "Well, if you want the whole story why don't you say that. I met Arthur Garfield Hays through Rumley. Put that in!"

"No, Arthur did not tell me that. Arthur, as a matter of fact, defended you. But I do want the whole story."

"Well, when I started my magazine Rumley said, 'You ought to meet Arthur Garfield Hays'."

"Mr. Hays was in Berlin on the Reichstag fire trial. You saw him in Berlin at that time?"

"I am a friend of his daughter. We were all together. I spent most of my time with him."

"Did you ever talk to him about the Reichstag fire trial?"

"Why—what difference could that make?"

"Let us assume—mind you, I am not saying you have anything to do with it—but let us assume that Arthur Garfield Hays, as one of the attorneys for the defendants, naturally would know the plans of the defense. If a charming woman, a friend of his daughters, let us say, whom he had no reason to distrust asked questions, she could learn a lot, couldn't she?"

"Yes, but——"

"Did you discuss the Reichstag fire trial with him?"

"Yes, but——"

"I understand. He said no more to you than he would discussing it with anyone else. He explained all that to me. Now regarding Mr. Rumley. How did you meet him?"

"Oh——" she rose from her chair with a quick motion.

"All right. Did Mr. Rumley ever okay a printer's bill for you when you went into bankruptcy?"

"He never did!"

"Very well, you are broke. You have no income. When you went to Washington last week you went direct to the Hays Adams House?"

"Yes."

"That's an expensive place. Why did you go there?"

"Because it's a nice place."

"That's a good reason," I laughed. "You stayed with some friends after that—Miss Margery Watson at the La Salle Apartments, 1928 Connecticut Avenue—is that right?"

"Yes."

"You had meetings at her apartment. Did you ever meet Kurt G. Sell there?"

"Who is he?" she asked blankly. "I never heard the name."

"Kurt G. Sell is the Washington correspondent for the German News Bureau. He is the man who vouched for Kurt G. W. Luedecke, who was in the United States as a correspondent for the Deutsche Volkischer Beobachter, a vicious anti-semitic Nazi paper Luedecke, as a result of Sell's vouching for him, gained admittance to the press gallery and the President's press conferences where the President frequently says things off the record. Luedecke has already confessed to being a Nazi propagandist."

"I never heard the name Kurt G. Sell," she repeated.

"Very well, let me read you the notes I took of a conversation I had with your hostess Miss Margery Watson on Oct. 24, 1934, the evening you had a meeting at her apartment. There were two people listening in on extension wires."

Miss Ilma stared at me as I read:

"Miss Watson?"

"Yes?"

"Is Miss Ilma in?"

"No, but I expect her about eight o'clock. There's to be a meeting here then. I assume she is out to dinner."

"She's doing nice work, isn't she?"

"Oh, marvelous! I am so happy with what she is doing."

"Has Ambassador Luther's secretary called yet?"

"No, but Kurt Sell has called a number of times and you know he is quite close to the German Embassy."

"Yes, I know. Do you expect him tonight?"

"Well, I don't know but he said he would drop in almost any time."

Miss Ilma jumped from her seat.

"Margery couldn't have said that! I don't know the man."

"I'm sorry. I am only reading you the notes of the conversation I had with her—with two people listening in. Now on Nov. 3, 1934, I telephoned her again in Washington. Two people listened in on this, too. I'll omit the introduction and establishing of the voice as Miss Watson's."

"Viola's visit was so fascinating," Miss Watson said. "She and Mrs. Roosevelt had quite a nice talk."

"Is that so?"

"Yes, and she's to see Mrs. Roosevelt in Hyde Park, too."

"Did Kurt Sell get in touch with her?"

"I don't know just what they discussed but I know she got in touch with him and they had so many plans. It's marvelous what a girl she is."

"Yes, she's sure marvelous."

"Is this Mr. Becker?" the voice suddenly asked.

"No, it isn't. I'm sorry."

"Oh," the voice grew a trifle cold. "I'm sorry I talked so personal. I'm sorry. Good night."

Miss Ilma rubbed an ivory hand across her eyes.

"I can't understand Margery saying this."

"You did see Mrs. Roosevelt, didn't you?"

"Yes," she said slowly.

"And a lot of high officials — like Secretary Wallace, for instance?"

"Yes," she said again in a low tone.

"What did you discuss with them?"

Miss Ilma walked over to me.

"I know what's on your mind. You think I am a Nazi agent. I am not! I am interested only in the Youth Movement. If you can't keep out the fact that I am an alien, can't you at least keep out that I saw Mrs. Roosevelt? Mrs. Roosevelt saw me only on condition that there be no publicity and if this thing comes out in THE NEW MASSES why, it will just break up all that I have been doing—all my plans—my whole career."

She started pacing again like a caged animal.

"Poppa!" she suddenly called.

Poppa came in from another room, a strapping man well over six feet, with a chest like a barrel.

Miss Ilma briefly explained the situation. There was nothing to be done about her being an alien; there was nothing to be done about her letters of introduction from Rumley but —Mrs. Roosevelt!

"Why must you use it?" her father asked. "Mrs. Roosevelt wouldn't like it."

"Well, my job is to write what I learn. Miss Ilma could communicate with Mrs. Roosevelt and the President's wife could ask THE NEW MASSES editors not to publish it," I suggested hopefully.

"Oh," Viola exclaimed, "they wouldn't do that for her."

"Well, I don't know what I could do about it," I said helplessly.

"What is the purpose of all these ques-

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tions?" her father demanded. "Whom do you represent besides THE NEW MASSES?"

"Just THE NEW MASSES," I assured him. "We are running a series of articles on the growth of anti-Semitism in the United States, the propaganda carried on by Nazi secret agents.

"My daughter is no Nazi agent!" he shouted. "If she were a Nazi agent I would break her neck myself right here while you look on."

"She is under no obligation to answer anything. I explained that to her. This is not a court. But she is a public figure, organizing a movement that has all the earmarks of a Fascist organization. She has made some anti-semitic statements——"

"How could I," Miss Ilma exclaimed. "Why, Arthur Garfield Hays is my lawyer and he is a Jew."

"Your daughter is moving in the highest political circles of the land. She organized the Youth Congress after she returned from a trip to Germany. She had letters of introduction from a man who was suspected of being a German agent during the war. The letters were to Nazi officials. And she will not tell who paid for her trip to Germany and her expenses abroad."

"Why should she tell who paid her expenses?"

"There is no reason why she should tell me."

"Is this a Senate inquiry?"

"No, just a NEW MASSES one."

"Suppose I say I gave her the money."

"I know you didn't."

I turned to Miss Ilma who was by this time a little pale.

"Do you realize that if you refuse to tell where you got your money to go to Germany to meet leaders of the Nazi movement just before you came here to organize the Congress, that you are open to grave suspicion?"

"I can't tell!"

"Why not? What is there to hide if you got it from a legitimate source?"

"I can't tell," she repeated, biting her lip.

"You realize the suspicion——"

"I can't help it. I can't tell."

"If you got it from some one on the level, why can't you tell?"

"I'll tell you who I got it from!" she exclaimed suddenly.

"You understand that I'll have to quote you?"

"Yes."

"You realize, too, that I shall check it?"

"With the man?"

"With his bank. I shall want to know if he withdrew that sum from his bank on or about the day you say."

"The bank can't tell you that!" her father exclaimed.

"I know, but I can manage to find out. Now, will you tell me."

"The History Society paid my expenses," she said in a low voice.

"A little earlier you said that they did not."

"You can check with them."

"Very well."

As I arose to go, I said:

"Miss Ilma, you are making a grave mistake in refusing to tell who paid your expenses to Germany. I know it was not the History Society."

"No, it was not," she said in a low voice.

"Will you tell me who gave you the money?"

"No!" she shouted. "I can't tell. I can't tell!"

And with this, I think, ends the Viola Ilma Youth Movement, with all its menacing Fascist tendencies, which the alien Viola Ilma organized after she went to Germany with money from a mysterious source, and with letters of introduction to Nazi leaders.

After the above story had been written, Arthur Garfield Hays' office, at the request of Miss Viola Ilma, stated that it had investigated her status at Ellis Island as well as the law governing her status as a citizen. According to Mr. Hays, Miss Ilma became a citizen when her mother resumed her citizenship following marriage to an alien, and therefore, Miss Ilma today is a citizen. Mr. Hays, when asked why then Miss Ilma travelled on a Swiss passport, said, "Well, I guess it was due to bad advice."

Next week Mr. Spivak will tell of the German exchange students who are secretly organizing Nazi cells to carry on anti-semitic propaganda in the colleges and universities here as well as the secret espionage organization organized in the colleges by men working with secret Nazi agents and anti-semitic propagandists.

A Hunger Marcher Reports

DAVID LURIE

ALBANY.

THE Dunn Memorial Bridge appears suddenly as you turn the last corner in Rensselaer on the road to Albany. It is a big bridge, a million dollar bridge of which the Albany Chamber of Commerce is very proud. Rensselaer is a small railroad town just opposite Albany. Its police chief, who met us four miles before the bridge, was very polite: "I know you people don't want any trouble and we don't want any trouble. We will give you a safe escort to the bridge, but don't make us responsible for what happens after. Don't take it out on the people of Rensselaer on your way back — whatever happens in Albany."

It was already late, it would soon be dark. We decided to go ahead without waiting for the up-state Hunger Marchers who were to meet us outside Rensselaer for a joint entry into Albany.

The Rensselaer police left us at the bridge. The Albany cops were waiting, lined up on both sides of the bridge on foot and on motorcycles, shifting expectantly from foot to foot, getting a firmer grasp on their clubs. We saw them standing there. We knew what was coming, but we rolled slowly toward them. The two lines closed on us like the jaws of a trap. They opened the door of the car at the head of our line and demanded the driver's license. As the driver reached for it, the first club smashed down on the head of the fellow next to him. The first drops of blood spattered the pavement. At that signal, the battle began. The police swarmed around all five trucks, occupants were pulled out and as each one stepped out, he was clubbed.

"We were riding peaceful and quiet," said Bill Landers, unemployed seaman. "The truck doors were closed so we didn't know where we were. All of a sudden the truck stops, the doors open, the tailboard drops down and about two dozen cops pile in, swinging their clubs, pulling every one out. I was hit over the head after I hit the pavement."

The marchers fell back, the cops chasing them. Many of the cops seemed to be drunk. Marchers who sought to pick up the fallen were beaten on the shoulders. Marchers who did not run fast enough were prodded. Several received leg injuries caused by night sticks thrown at them after they had got beyond arm's reach of the cops. On up the hill, over two railroad bridges, up Clinton Heights, the main body of the marchers was pushed, till finally two and a half miles from the bridge they reached a spot where they could camp. Here, on Onderdonck's farm, they could stop, gather their forces, make a resting place for the wounded, set up their camp. Here was established Camp Lehman.

The Up-State contingent, made up of five "pleasure" cars and two trucks, moved slowly all day from Johnstown where they had been received by the Independent Leather Workers' Union and the Slovak International Workers' Order. In Amsterdam they were fed by the Transient Bureau; in Schenectady they were whisked through by the police to the city line where they turned towards Troy, following the route which would connect them with the New York contingent four miles outside Albany for a joint entrance. Informed by a

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scout car that the New York contingent could not be found and was undoubtedly already in Albany, they changed their route and came into Albany along the Watervliet road. They were not surprised when they saw the cops, about 150 of them, lined up to meet them. They had been met by cops at Amsterdam and Schenectady and thought that this was simply a larger escort. On orders, they swung over to the curb. Before the brakes had halted the wheels, the cops attacked.

But here the police followed a somewhat different procedure. This part of Albany is a factory and warehouse section. The built-up city stretches two miles beyond the city line. The marchers here numbered 98. After beating about half of the 98, and forcing them into a line up, where they were questioned, the leaders were separated from the rest of the marchers. Then there began a process of dividing the marchers into two categories, foreign born and Negroes into one, native born whites into the other. About forty of the obviously native born whites were herded into the two trucks and sent back across the line towards Watervliet. The rest were herded into police wagons and large Packards and taken off to the station house.

In the station house they were searched several times, all money and valuables were taken from them. These were returned. Then they were moved to another station house, where they were searched once more. This time the money was not returned, collection boxes were broken into and the contents pocketed by the police. Watches, fountain pens, blankets were "confiscated." Here the marchers were booked, divided into groups of four or five and given to individual officers as his arrested prisoners. Here they were fingerprinted and photographed and here the beatings began all over again.

Workers were stood against the wall, hit in the eyes with bare fists. When they fell they were kicked. It was in the jails that the upstate marchers got their worst beating. Negroes were especially attacked. A Negro stood against the wall. A cop, his coat off, his eyes shining with excitement, swung hard at his head with a club. As the worker dropped, he was met with an uppercut, which jolted him upward once more. As he dropped a second time, he got a sharp kick in the groin. The shock reviving him with the sharp pain straightened him to meet once more the blows of club and fist. Others were forced to run a gauntlet, propelled by clubs, hit from cop to cop. Finally, drunk and insane with the brutality, tired with administering the blows, the cops quit. The prisoners were put in the cells. There were about 150 in various station houses and in the county jail, thirty-eight on the road to Gloversville, about eighty at Camp Lehman. Cold, hungry, many of them badly wounded, these eighty stood or sat around the fires built with wood brought by State troopers. Coffee was brought to them with the help of a farm woman and another woman who sympathized with their plight. But it was not until about 4 a.m. Wednesday morning that they received hot oatmeal and coffee brought out by the Marchers' commissary which had gotten into Albany in the afternoon.

By morning, Joseph Tauber, sent by the I.L.D., and Arthur Harvey, of Albany, appeared in court as defense counsel. Tauber represented in court not only the jailed marchers, but the rising protest throughout the state and in the city itself. On every street corner during the early hours of Tuesday night, in every all-night restaurant and beer place, talk of the attack went on. Few were on the side of the police.

So Tauber and Harvey came into court armed with the protest of the majority of the people in the town and the support of thousands miles away. On the first day only the officer who had booked the first four defendants testified. His name was Woods; he weighed 250 pounds and was more than six feet tall, but he swore he had had to "protect himself" from the marchers and so had arrested them. He was saved from being completely tangled up in his own contradictions only through the intercession of the judge and the third assistant district attorney, a smart, well-dressed young son of a politician named McGuinness, a local boy whose whole case was that these were not really "hunger" marchers, because they had some money on their persons when arrested. Woods was uncomfortable, not quite knowing what it was all about, reflecting the bewilderment of the Albany police.

Wednesday afternoon, the marchers were brought in from Camp Lehman. Subpoenas had been issued by the defense, in order to get them in as material witnesses, and the marchers came silently into town, marching double file through the streets to the court, passing through the crowded streets conscious that there was no hostile glance except from the police.

Thursday morning the Conference opened, every delegate conscious that half their comrades were in jail. The first order of business was the election of a delegation to the Mayor to demand the release of those still in jail.

On this same morning, the arrested marchers themselves took the stand for the first time and twelve were brought from jail as the first witnesses. The District Attorney was baffled by the steadfastness of the defendants. All knew exactly why they had come to Albany, all were conscious of the meaning of their demands, all were courageous in explaining how necessary it was for them to present these demands. That day the first 24 of the prisoners were paroled, and marched to the Conference Hall, where they were greeted first with the singing of *Solidarity,* then with the embraces of the already arrived delegates. Though most of those released at this time were from upstate, unknown to the New York marchers present, they were received as brothers, unknown arms on their shoulders.

That night marked the first three victories, the paroling of the 24, the granting of food and shelter by the authorities, a telegram from Lehman saying that his secretary would hear the marchers' demands and that he had asked Mayor Thacher to grant a permit for a parade.

Israel Amter, National Secretary of the Unemployed Council, and Communist candidate for Governor, arrived at the Conference Hall to greet the marchers. Instead they greeted him, cheering his every word. In a short speech he told them of the nationwide protest, told them of the bloody events at Denver. They stood resolved to stay in Albany till all the marchers were released, to carry on their conference.

The next day, preparations went on for the march. At first Mayor Thacher and Police Chief Smurl tried to refuse the permit. Finally they had to give in. That morning, Friday, all of the remaining prisoners were in court ready to be paroled. Here Phil Bard, cartoonist, member of the John Reed Club and an organizer for the Hunger March, was put on the stand. THE NEW MASSES came in for some comment when the District Attorney having asked whether THE NEW MASSES, to which Bard had testified he contributed, was not a "Communist magazine," was given a list of internationally known contributors (but he had never heard of "Honree Bar-bush"). Tauber offered to pay half the fee if the District Attorney would subscribe, but he shouted that he didn't want to join the organization. That morning all the remaining prisoners were paroled. They joined the other marchers, ready to parade.

Long before three o'clock, when the march to the Capitol was to start, the police were lined up on South Pearl Street. Inside the Conference Hall, everything was being prepared. Marshals were chosen, the committee of six to present the demands was elected. Now we were ready.

Crowds were waiting all along the street, as we filed two by two out the door, taking our place four abreast in the march. At the signal we started forward, silently, most of the men walking with their hats and caps in their hands, all of them looking straight ahead.

There was no music, we needed no drum to beat time for us, as we marched forward. All held their heads high, men, women, youth, as we marched. The crowds grew thicker as we passed. It started to snow as we turned from South Pearl Street into State Street but it stopped almost immediately. The crowds were greater as we swung along, still slowly, up the hill to the Capitol. There we took the steps, standing in long lines facing the Capitol while our representatives went inside. This was our victory. We felt, as we stood there singing, waiting for the delegation of six to return, that there would be other, stronger marches to this same Capitol building. We felt we had led the way. After the report of the delegation we turned and as slowly marched back to the headquarters. But now all were smiling, all tasted victory with every breath. We held our disciplined ranks and in silence marched back to the Hall to finish our business.

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Slumming at the Museum

SIDNEY HILL

NEW YORK CITY, through the cooperation of the Municipal Housing Authority, Lavanburg Foundation, the Welfare Council, Columbia University, and a number of American and foreign experts, is staging a slum-clearance and low-cost housing exhibition at the very smart Museum of Modern Art. The visitor is treated to a lavish display of pictures, photo murals, charts and models showing the terrible housing conditions under which some two million inhabitants of the world's richest city live. The crowded walls and panels are well calculated to impress the casual patron of the Museum with their frankness. Here at last is a public exhibition that dares to tell the truth about society's obligation to the poor, about the great lack, for the majority of workers, of even the most elementary comforts and sanitary facilities; the misery, the devastating depression; the disease, malnutrition and other physical dangers to life involved in being poor and having to live in the slums. With an eye to the gallery, the exhibitors have gathered the most shocking photographic scenes of New York's blighted rookeries and their inhabitants that one is ever likely to encounter. For the further titillation of the well-dressed, comfortable spectator there is offered an actual tenement flat, transplanted from the slums of Yorkville with its squalor, filth and odors intact. Here are all the thrills and shudders of a slumming expedition, vicariously enjoyed with none of the usual inconveniences.

The whole show is a veritable orgy of contrition. Sympathy for the slum dweller runs rampant on the walls of the museum. Pictures of mothers and children, hungry and in rags; miserably and inadequately sheltered in the "rotten slums." Everything is loudly confessed; slums exist because interest rates and rents are too high and the wages of workers too low for decent housing. "Good housing is a vital need—not a charity."

The City Housing Exhibit appears to be engaging in a radical and fearless exposé. Actually, however, attacking slum conditions is quite respectable and safe. Books, magazines, newspapers, radio, cinema—all have joined in the crusade. And they all treat the question in substantially the same manner. It seems that the slum is some sort of sore or cancer which is caused by poor planning, or by high interest rates or the wrong method of taxation. The more liberal exposers hint that low wages have something to do with it—but they won't press the point. Some—notably social workers—even claim that the blighted areas are due to the "apathy" (sic) of the slum dweller who has become attached to his rookery. Always the special and more or less isolated factors are set up as straw figures for easy disposal. But what these slum clearers and housing experts rarely tell, perhaps because they dare not, is that the wretched hovels in which the poor are forced to live are deeply and inextricably wound up with the entire society in which we live; in other words, with capitalism.

The City Housing Exhibit, for example, rails against the greed and the calloused, anti-social attitude of the slum owner—in the abstract. It fails, however, to disclose, and it knows this perfectly well, that great sections of New York's slums are owned by our most respected citizens and institutions—by the Astors, the Hamilton Fishes, the banks, the very oldest and most venerable churches, the great universities, even by the City itself.

The City Housing Exhibit proclaims a great shortage of decent workers' housing, as established by the recent Real Property Inventories. But in terms of the real estate market—in terms of profit—there is no shortage whatsoever. Indeed, the real estate boards would have us understand that in view of the high percentage of vacant apartments disclosed by the same surveys, there is actually a surplus of housing. Is it unreasonable to expect the slum clearance workers and housing crusaders to clarify this seeming paradox to the bewildered layman. Why, for example, does our exhibition not explain to us how the Roosevelt Housing Program, which also gave lip-service to pro-social ideals, failed; how the housing campaign was inaugurated over a year ago with a newspaper blast about the immediate necessity of 800,000 new homes at a cost of 14 billion dollars to be spent in 2 years but how the P.W.A. allotted only 150 million for the purpose; and how even this pitifully small sum was never spent because the chambers of commerce and the real estate interests flocked down to Washington in droves crying that this was cut-throat government competition; and finally how Roosevelt, to pacify them, turned the Housing Program into a Renovising Program which is nothing more than the guaranteeing by the government of loans and mortgages of private banks and companies and which is currently in process of failure because home owners cannot be ballyhooed into paying over 9 percent interest for a loan.

Such an explanation would, in addition, enable the public to evaluate properly the rosy statements issued regularly from Washington concerning the housing program just about to be started. The latest release, timed for the elections, appeared in the newspapers only last week and we are again promised "a program of slum-clearance and low-cost housing" involving, this time, the much reduced sum of 5 billion dollars spread over 5 years. But since the interests which spiked the original housing program are still extremely potent we have no reason to be optimistic concerning this one.

By directing its attack against such abstractions as greed and "rugged individualism," or against other symptomatic issues such as the absence of rational city-planning and reactionary building ordinances, the Housing Exhibit avoids and obfuscates the real factors. By cleverly playing upon the ready sympathies of a gullible public, without, at the same time, exposing the powerful anti-social forces of the banks and big property interests, the housing reformers and experts serve to conceal the fact that it is the whole economic structure itself, of which these profiteering groups are a part, which is the basic reason for the existence of the slum.

The fate of the "New Deal" housing campaign has demonstrated a simple but significant truism. The real estate interests, despite their internecine throat slitting, are agreed on one issue, namely: that they are as unalterably opposed to decent shelter for the great mass of workers and the unemployed as the industrialists are admittedly opposed to decent wages and the complete elimination of unemployment. And for precisely the same reasons: because adequate housing for all workers means non-profit, completely public housing. And that means the elimination of the fat dividends which slums usually pay their owners and it also means the elimination of the private speculator who will build, according to capitalist rules, not for social use but only for profit.

We will soon see how, with such a false approach to the problem, the sponsors of the exhibition were led to an equally false and demagogic solution. And it will also be seen how, in addition to pulling the wool over our eyes, they actually attempt to help shake us down. The solution to the housing question is formulated by the exhibition as follows:

> Investment in housing must be secured by:
> 1. long time planning.
> 2. government control.
> 3. reasonable returns.
> 4. low interest rates.
> 5. long term amortization.

The first two points are sound enough. The exhibition correctly states that an adequate housing program must be planned in advance to avoid the past chaos and social waste. It is also correct in asking for government control, if by that it means the public ownership and management of the housing and the land on which it is built. But what are "reasonable returns?" The building industry knows full well that the wages of most workers are too low to permit of even "reasonable" profit. That is why there has been so little construction in the past 5 years. We have the example of the so-called "limited-dividends" corpora-

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tions which agree to limit themselves to only 6 percent but which nevertheless charge 2 and 3 times the rents which slum-dwelling workers can pay. (For example, the Hillside development now being constructed in the Bronx and the Woodside in Queens, both of which will charge $11 per room per month.) And what about the 15 million unemployed? It would seem then that "reasonable returns" would not benefit the very people for whom the exhibit pretends sympathy. And as for low interest and long term amortization, certainly the speculator will welcome such aid from the government. It will not enable him to re-house the slum dweller but it will give him the opportunity of competing in the medium rental market with those other speculators who unfortunately built without the benefit of easy public money. Incidentally, at the Housing Institute conference conducted in connection with the Exhibit, we found that our reformers were not so much concerned with providing housing within the workers' means but with a "maximum" interest rate. Indeed one of our outstanding housing experts insisted that rather than become "unbusinesslike" and cut interests too low(!) we ought to begin by reducing building costs through other methods; for example, the elimination of "luxuries" such as central heat and hot water.

Points 3, 4, and 5, mean simply that private initiative is willing to take a little less profit, especially when its investments are subsidized and guaranteed by the government. But it must be obvious, even to liberals by now, that any form of private building and ownership contradicts the only progressive features of the exhibition's proposal. For, as has already been indicated, advance planning presupposes complete public ownership and control.

This must lead us to the conclusion that the City Housing Exhibit, consciously or otherwise, is using a liberal front to promote a cause which, to be kind, is decidedly non-liberal. It is not necessary to take merely the author's word. The following is from a review of the exhibition in the New York World-Telegram of Oct. 21, 1934:

> The country has been blanketed with surveys and exhibits on low-cost housing for the masses in the last few years. Never has there been one which takes a Utopian dream and proves in terms of low interest, long amortization and dollars and cents, that its fulfillment would be an economic advantage. The organizers of the exhibit have been guided by the sound economics of values, by the principle that the real value of land depends on the continuity of its social usefulness.

But Europe, the experts will explain, has done it this very way. Why can't we? In the first place let us see what Europe has done. The exhibition displays a number of graphs and photographs showing the volume and kind of workers' housing constructed in various European countries in recent years. The graphs and pictures, however, deliberately omit a great deal of more important information. For example, we are not told that what little housing was achieved in these countries was won through the organized strength and efforts of the workers. The intense reluctance with which the ruling class granted even this pittance is illuminated by the bloody violence with which it is withdrawn as soon as the opportunity arises. The City Housing Exhibit has the hypocrisy to show us the Karl Marx Apartment in Vienna without its now historically symbolic, shell-torn facades. We see bright pictures of the housing development in Frankfort-am-Main. But the exhibition is silent concerning the smashing of the housing co-operative societies and the abrogation of their rights in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. And this process is going on, although less violently, in Socialist Sweden and in Holland and other liberal countries through the bankruptcies of the co-operatives and the inability of workers to pay the rents demanded in the houses pictured on the walls of the museum.

England, the gentle reformers urge, can show us the way. "We ought," says Helen Alfred, Secretary of the National Public Housing Conference, "to electrocute the experts who do not have the English type of mind. If the English have done nothing else they at least are *thinking clearly.*" (italics mine, S. H.) Let us see what this means.

> London:
>
> On almost every road leading out of London one pases long rows of houses. . . . All the trappings of a building boom are there. . . . If the new houses were sturdily built, there might be less harm in such a nation-wide wave of installment buying. But evidence accumulates that the bulk of the new houses are ugly and badly planned and that thousands of them are being built of shoddy material.
>
> Even more disturbing is the greed of speculators who have huddled new houses together on the least possible amount of land. . . .
>
> In short, England is repeating many of the worst blunders made in the United States during the years of unrestrained individualism before 1929. She may some day regret her own building boom, even though it keeps 425,000 men busy in constructional trades today and has increased the profits of auxiliary industries by 87 percent in the past year. (Housing Boom Aids Britain Recovery. N. Y. Times, Oct. 14, 1934.)

Here is "long time planning" and "government control." What do we think now of our European example with its low interest rates and its "reasonable" returns? And what can we think of the honesty of the reformers and experts, and the housing standards their Exhibit seeks to promote?

A word about the Yorkville tenement flat referred to earlier. This was included in the exhibition at considerable expense by three wealthy young men who are promoting a slum "rehabilitation" scheme in Yorkville. According to this scheme the rents of the remodelled flats (governmentally subsidized) would be considerably higher than those paid by the present occupants and, among other advantages, their prospectus lists: "Speculative value of property left with owner." To convince us of their social interest, they proclaim that the area in question "results in ill health, crime, lowered morale (slum mind)—social restlessness."

It would seem unnecessary to explode again the theory that slums breed ill health, crime, etc. John Strachey discussed in THE NEW MASSES recently the now notorious experiment in England where 750 families were moved out of a slum into "garden homes" on the outskirts of Stockton. At the end of a year it was found that malnutrition, disease, and other ills had increased because the higher cost of living in the new houses left less of the family income for food and other necessities. And as for "social restlessness," that also is not caused by the slums but by the whole rotten capitalist system which denies workers a decent living. The young men who set up the exhibition flat are apparently not aware of the fundamental causes. In promoting their idea they assure prospective patrons that it will dilute workers' complaints. In this connection consider the statement of Dr. Gottfried Feder, Reich Commissioner for Land Settlement, who also wants to clean out slums.

> The modern metropolis . . . leads to the accumulation of anti-social elements, becomes the breeding place of Marxist agitation." (Reich is preparing for Economic War.—N. Y. Times, June 3, 1934.)

The City Housing Exhibit side-steps one more question: that of the inter-relation of an adequate workers' housing program with unemployment insurance. The people chiefly responsible for this exhibition are well aware, for example, that the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians has called their attention to this question by actively supporting the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill (HR 7598) in connection with its own Housing Program. But the City Housing Exhibit, as we have already seen, is afraid of such issues because it knows that to face them is to expose the forces at work behind the fake sympathy of the photo-murals, the hypocritical castigation of irrelevancies and the demagogic appeal to "courage." Yes, it is courage that is needed. But it is the organized and enlightened courage of those workers whose misery currently decorates the fashionable museum—whose declining "New Deal" incomes force still further out-of-reach the tantalizing, sunny, garden apartments of the Exhibit. Despite the deep-seated conflict between those capitalist interests which stand to gain by the so-called "low-cost" housing and those which stand to lose, we may conceivably have some housing constructed in the United States in the near future. But it will not re-house the slum dwellers nor provide adequate, high standard housing for all workers unless they themselves see that it does. A really sufficient housing program requires a comprehensiveness of planning and public ownership which we know is unattainable under capitalism. Nevertheless, organized workers, intellectual and manual, can win concessions. But they must continuously fight even to retain them or the tragic story of Vienna will repeat itself here.

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Capitalism Sterilizes

LOUISE PREECE

IN THE DAYS of prosperity, capitalism forbade birth control information to the working-class in order that it might have an abundant supply of cheap labor. Now it proposes to eliminate, by sterilization, further offspring of some of the human beings whom it has brought into existence. As unemployment increases, the government indulges in an orgy of crop and livestock destruction, this resulting in a situation of approximately one-fifth of the population being economically unable to support itself. Twenty-seven states have sterilization laws—Indiana, California, Washington, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota, Alabama, North Carolina, Delaware, Montana, Virginia, Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Utah, Mississippi, Arizona, West Virginia, Vermont and Oklahoma. Georgia and Texas are considering the measure. These laws class as fit subjects for sterilization prisoners and institution inmates accused of everything from rape to dementia praecox. The measures in question have been brought into special prominence as a result of the law which went into effect in Fascist Germany the first of this year, and because of the recent flurry in Oklahoma.

One finds that such laws are enacted more in times of crises than in any other period, these crises being the direct result of the lack of balance between capital and labor. From 1907 until 1913, only seven states had adopted legal sterilization. But in 1913, during the pre-war depression, four states adopted the policy. In 1917, when the United States entered the war, three states adopted the measure. Physical and nervous debility upon the part of returned soldiers, coupled with rapid social changes in the life of the people, resulted in ten more states adopting this measure from 1919 to 1928. The people were slowly recovering from the post-war effects when the debacle of 1929 hit them. From 1929 until 1931, four more states adopted the surgeon's knife as the sine qua non of mental therapy. Medical records show that 17,898 persons had been legally sterilized up to January 1, 1933. Many of the states which have enacted sterilization laws have failed to put them into effect. Unquestionably, Dictator Hitler's edict ordering compulsory sterilization for 40,000 hapless people has increased sentiment for the practice of the measure in this country. Hitler declared that these persons were "likely to become charges upon society and a menace to its well-being." The only persons falling into this category who are exempt are those who voluntarily enter asylums, and there the officials do the rest. Hitler's hearings of cases for sterilization are absolutely secret, and punishable by heavy fines or imprisonment are violations of this secrecy. The dictator cannot disguise the real intention of this law. He has two courts for its use: persons regarded as "defective" are hailed before one of the eugenics courts, which decide on vasectomy and salpingectomy operations; persons accused of "sexual offenses" are brought before the criminal court, which gives the penalty of castration. This is the most cruel form of sterilization in existence, and one can readily see its inhuman use against the Jewish race and against radicals of all types. Now the little Hitlers of America take up the cry and bang the legislative tocsin for a statute which it is believed will expedite the Roosevelt millennium.

Back of the conditions arising from any depression there is the undercurrent need of people for normal lives under a normal system, but they find themselves trying to adjust their lives to a system which is not normal. Dr. H. J. Muller, considered to be the foremost geneticist in the world, and who is this year connected with the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet Union, astounded the delegates to the Third International Congress of Eugenics held in New York two years ago with these words:

> Under the capitalist system of economics, the fulfilling of the eminently social function of producing the next generation entails an excessively heavy individual economic burden which, added to the other economic stresses affecting most of the population, and especially the woman, under this system, constitutes an often intolerable affliction. As a result, individual economic considerations rather than considerations of the genetic worth of the coming generations must in the main govern human reproduction, in so far as the later is voluntary at all, and eugenics must remain an idle dream.

Sociologists, scientists and government authorities make the general complaint that a working class family has twice as many children as a family of the professional or upper class, and that one-fifth of the population is unemployed to the extent of being unable to feed these families. Instead of taking into consideration that unemployment has rapidly penetrated into every strata but that of the leisure class, which does have to work, they confine this one-fifth, called "dependents," to the working class. They bring forward batches of statistics in an effort to prove that children of the middle and upper classes are mentally and physically superior to the children of the workers, ignoring the fact that the latter class was encouraged to produce large families; that working class mothers, in addition to exploitation in the fields or factories, had to breed until their physical condition was exhausted; that malnutrition, child labor and lack of education have retarded these children in many instances. There is also the fact that for the most part women of the working class do not receive sufficient prenatal care, if any, and that infant mortality occurs daily because physicians refuse treatment to those without money. If these expectant mothers get any treatment at all, it is one of the charity clinics, to which young internes are sent for training. Proponents of the sterilization measure pay no attention to the need of these women for adequate prenatal and post-natal care. They loudly denounce that vast number of women who suffer manic-depressive attacks of insanity just before or after childbirth; they demand that they be rendered sterile. The high-salaried intelligentsia have no remedy for the ills of society other than that of treating the effects of capitalism. And they have not been able to prove that intellect is based upon class distinction. Yet Dr. Henry H. Goddard of New Jersey, another eugenist, advocates a plan of going into the wretched homes of the workers and routing out half-starved children for sterilization. He does not claim a class basis for this, and admits that mental deficiency may arise from a number of causes. But he says nothing about going into the homes of millionaires and seizing their children for compulsory sterilization. He also advises the colonization of so-called defective children by placing them in forced labor camps.

There is no evading the real purpose of sterilization as a measure to ease a growing unemployment situation with all of its implied menace to capitalist society. Dr. J. H. Landman of the reactionary College of the City of New York is another proponent of this measure who tries to appear unbiased regarding the class issue. But in an article in the *Scientific American* last June he stated:

> Our country suffers today from an overproduction and an underconsumption of commodities, but also from a surplus reproduction of our population. As society is constituted at present, production, consumption, and population are not properly equated. Not that our country is too poor in natural resources and area to maintain its population. On the contrary, our country can support a still larger population. But one-fifth of the population of the United States today is surplus—a mass of people that is socially unadjusted or maladjusted and that we can never altogether properly absorb into our social and economic life. Many of these people are of such inferior quality that we should never want to incorporate them again into our society. These unfortunate people, many of whom are socially desirable and others socially undesirable, include the mentally diseased, such the manics and the dementia praecoxes; the dependents, such as the unemployed, the deaf, the deformed, and the blind; the delinquents, such as the wayward and the criminals; the mentally deficient, such as the morons and idiots; the degenerates, such as the sadists and the drug fiends; and the infectious, such as the tubercular and the syphilitics.

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Dr. Landman refers to the statement of President Roosevelt that of about 10,000,000 unemployed in the country, one-half of this number will never again find a place in industrial life. Elaborating upon this New Deal, Dr. Landman stated, "It is no exaggeration then that there are 25,000,000 in the United States who are socially inadequate and who are a constant menace to our country and race."

The doctor has presented his side of the question clearly. His statistics show the rapid increase, even to the doubling point, of persons incarcerated in prisons and state hospitals. When he places the great mass of the unemployed in the same category with those actually insane or criminal, he is hearkening back to the obsolete notion of complete individual responsibility. This formula runs as follows: the mind which cannot adjust itself to any condition is abnormal, and must be restrained if impossible of adjustment. It is the converse of the laissez faire that anyone may become whatever he chooses.

Dr. Landman does not seem to consider that mental deficiency and criminality are not confined to a class; that although the upper classes are being encouraged to reproduce more than formerly, the constant adhering of this aristocracy to its own class in order to maintain its monopoly makes more blue blood than red; that most of the Southern aristocracy is descended from indentured people who came to this country to escape imprisonment for various so-called crimes in England, that had sterilization laws been in effect here at that time, they would have been subject to them. As for all-around deficiency in the ruling class,

> The capitalists themselves would benefit proportionally more than the workers, because their endless greed and lust for money and power, their cut-throat competition, their lazy, luxurious life, their filthy and decaying habits often cause mental diseases, maladjustment and low mentality in their own families.—Rational Living, 1934.

But this is the class which the eugenists encourage to reproduce. Under capitalism, the working class is to be sterilized so that its size can be controlled. This year, the ruling class, from this starving mass of people, increased its profits six hundred percent. Next year it will grasp even more, and will strike at the working class again and again in order to do it.

But the workers, too, are striking. In Toledo, Milwaukee, all up and down the Pacific Coast, and now, in nearly every textile factory, they are waging war against the very conditions which breeds that at which the sterilization laws are aimed. In less organized phases of industry, and in isolated districts, spontaneous strikes flare up. Thousands of intellectuals are aligning themselves with the cause for which the workers are fighting. A most recent and notable instance is the protest made by Huxley and other European scientists against the use of science as a political weapon and destroyer of human life. These scientists have announced a conference to be held in London, to which American scientists are to be invited. Among other "psuedo-sciences" which they have condemned is that of sterilization.

Thousands of workers and intellectuals will pay with their minds, their lives and their freedom for every advantage gained. We have, on one hand, the broken people for whom there really is no place at present because they are mentally irresponsible. All of these are victims of the system, whether from some hereditary taint in the germ plasm which in itself may be a fault of society, whether from the ravaging effects of trying to live under the present day scheme, or from the torture of the "third degree." Under the sterilization laws, they will be at the mercy of institution physicians, who are generally internes getting their training or medics who have become too incompetent or too old for private practice.

The state institutions are utterly undeserving of the name "hospital." Here one would expect to find expert medical treatment, expert nursing, correct diets, and psychotherapy for the patient. This is supplied very inadequately. These hospitals are no more than prisons which keep away from society those adjudged incapable of caring for themselves. Since the beginning of the depression hospitals, jails and clinics over the country are filled to overflowing with the insane. In many cases where a patient recovers, he cannot leave because there is no employmnt for him, and his family would have to feed him when they themselves might have nothing. It is a common practice for families to send aged parents or other relatives to a state hospital after breakdowns arising from the very unendurability of a situation which throws them upon their children for support.

Granted that physicians are capable of performing sterilization operations successfully, they still are not justified in proceeding, not only because of the futility of sterilization under our present society, but because so little is known about the nature of insanity, whether structural or functional. Dr. R. A. Fisher indicates that about 11 percent of the feebleminded of any generation are the direct offspring of feebleminded, and that the other 89 percent are the offspring of parents apparently sound. (N. Y. Times, 1932.) Basing his information on a survey made of England and Wales by a Departmental Committee, John MacPherson is of the opinion that the forms of mental defect caused by disease or injury before or after birth, in infancy, or in early childhood may amount to from 10 to 15 percent of the whole number of idiots, imbeciles and feebleminded. "Some modern authorities . . . assert that from 40 to 50 percent of all cases are due to syphilis, scarlet fever, measles, encephalitis and other diseases received during birth, or to pre-natal affections of various kinds." (Nineteenth Century And After, 1929.) If so little is known about the feebleminded, how much more there is to be known about the insane, who in many cases have minds which can be restored to reason. There is, for instance, that type of insanity known as dementia praecox, which calls for sterilization under the law. Confining itself mostly to youth, dementia praecox is said to be the most evasive classification as far as research is concerned. Yet, 50 percent of cases of the insane are said to come under this category, which seems to be used in all cases where a definite diagnosis cannot be reached in regard to a patient. Records show that students are often victim to the disease. And dementia praecox becomes very significant at a time when students are breaking down as the result of trying to work their way through school, and when so many young people are unable to find jobs. The extreme blundering of the medical profession is shown in the fact that out of fifteen states having sterilization laws, records show that twice as many operations have been performed on the insane as on the feebleminded.

In regard to tuberculosis, which is spreading rapidly because of the lowered standard of living, there is little to be said at the present. But it is a classification which falls under the sterilization measure; and although the operation is said to be private and voluntary, tubercular patients are being sterilized. Popenoe is of the opinion that more women are being sterilized for tuberculosis than for anything else.

Another angle of sterilization is its application to "habitual criminals," those serving from two to three and more terms in prison; to militant members of the working class sent to prisons and institutions on "frame-up" charges; and to Negroes, Jews and foreign elements, which are regarded as "inferior." Let us see how the sterilization law can hide a multitude of crimes on the part of the authorities and physicians.

Castration was formerly the therapy of sterilization. But the cruelty of this method caused so much opposition that it is no longer supposed to be in use. With the discovery of vasectomy and salpingectomy, the operation has been made very simple. On a man, it is simply the cutting and tying of the sperm ducts, this preventing the spermatozoa from entering the womb of the woman. The sperm ducts are reached through an incision of the scrotum on both sides. Little inconvenience and pain is caused to the patient, it is claimed, the operation taking fifteen or twenty minutes. With a woman, the operation is far more complex, and amounts to the nature of an appendectomy. The abdomen, though, is opened in horizontal fashion. Both fallopian tubes are cut and tied. This prevents the entrance of the egg cells into the womb. A general anaesthetic is usually administered, and the operation, which requires about an hour, generally makes necessary a ten-day convalescence in order that the muscles can grow together again.

The victim has more than an unskilled knife to fear in this instance. There can be such complications as peritonitis, either anesthesia, adhesions, nervous disorders and, on the part of the woman, painful menstruation,

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which the medics cheerfully dismiss as "suggestion." A woman radical might easily fear the denial of proper hospitalization or some serious misplacement of the internal organs which might make her an invalid for life. Certainly both men and women have the right to fear the injection of venereal disease germs during such an operation, for there are reports of attempts made by prison authorities to infect class war prisoners. This danger, and "frame-up" methods to incriminate in other ways such prisoners has been brought to the attention of the working class time and again.

The first mass fight against sterilization is being waged by the prisoners of the McAlester, Oklahoma, state penitentiary. Under the recently amended Oklahoma law, "third timers" are subject to compulsory sterilization. George Winkler, a young prisoner serving his third time for burglary, volunteered for the test case. Winkler is married, but has no children. The court has ordered him to undertake the operation. In the same prison there are thousands of others who are serving first and second terms, and 500 who are serving third terms. These prisoners have been saving their money to pay the expenses of taking the Winkler test case to the State Supreme Court. If this maneuver fails, they will take the case to the United States Supreme Court. The injustice which the prisoners feel about sterilization is shown in their demanding that a committee be chosen from their own ranks to attend the hearing and report to the other prisoners the proceedings. Winkler has stated that he does not consider "lard-buying politicians" capable of passing on his own status. The more enlightened person will see beyond this to the fact that sterilization will be used only as a brutal measure in an effort to stem unemployment and unrest.

Gov. W. H. Murray, in reference to the Winkler case of this drought-stricken state, said, "More attention ought to be paid to criminals than to persons of unsound mind. Criminality and weakness of the brain are both unmistakably due to inheritance." (Literary Digest, 1934.) This stupid remark can be answered in the words of Dr. Muller:

> Certain slum districts of our cities constitute veritable factories for the production of criminality among those who happen to be born in them, whether their parents were of the criminal class or not, and analysis of the lives of various individual criminals reveals to what extent potentially valuable citizens may be turned to a life of habitual crime through the pressure of our social system. It is society, not the individual, which is the real criminal, and which stands to be judged.—N. Y. Times, 1932.

One has only to compare the developing program of the Soviet Union to that of America to appreciate the force of Dr. Muller's remarks. In the Soviet Union pre-natal care is given to the prospective mother; medical attention is afforded all of the people; there are jobs and food; schools are conducted under the expert care of nurses and teachers; the slums have been abolished while sanitary buildings have taken their place. And one finds there no tension prevailing in the family through the dependence of some members upon others. These people control their state, and the state cares for the people. Prostitution is denounced to the point where it has practically disappeared. Here in America young girls and women who ask for food at the relief stations are often told to "get out and hustle." Yet the sterilization measure applies to prostitution. The medicine men, doing their war dance under the Stars and Stripes, chant: "Come and get sterilized. It will give you wealth, health and happiness."

The End of Bourgeois Poetry

D. S. MIRSKY

IN MY opinion T. S Eliot is unsurpassed by the bourgeois poets writing in England or France today. I am aware that the regime of coteries established in bourgeois poetry for more than a generation makes it doubly difficult to prove my contention. Poetic reputations are confined to sects and I have by no means investigated them all. Now it is quite possible that some of them which are unknown to me contain poets not less remarkable than Eliot. However, the physical difficulties of investigating every sect are really easier to circumvent than that of learning their idioms. For an essential feature of the regime of coteries is that each one owns its own exclusive idiom which an outsider cannot easily learn in a short time. The increasing fame of Eliot has illustrated more than once this linguistic difficulty. Thousands of readers have been baffled by the obscurity of his poetic grammar and very cautious critics (notably I. A. Richards and Edwin Muir) have been heedless enough to analyze his work without having learned his vernacular.

This obscurity of contemporary poets is not alone a question of logic or of those accumulated ellipses which have become almost obligatory and which turn modern poetry into a bewildering and undecipherable short-hand at first glance. What is more serious is that each poet has his own particular symbolic language which he does not bother to explain to the reader and which only a very experienced psychoanalyst could understand. The poet no longer cares to be understood. Nor does the reader care to understand. Poetry has ceased to be a means of communication; the forum of poetry has become a market for the values of snobbism which can be readily peddled without concern for their intrinsic content. Poetic reputations have become purely accidental, bestowed on persons who do not exist as poets. Therefore the market of poetic values has no interest whatsoever for anyone wishing to study either the poetry or the poetic sensibility of the dying bourgeoisie. It conveys nothing about the reader's interest or degree of comprehension. It is a phenomenon of social organization belonging to the domain of sociology and economy.

Do the bourgeois poets deserve better treatment? Is there anything of real value behind the disconcerting show-window of their idiosyncrasies? Never has poetry been so devoid of meaning, so deprived of all socially valid content. The universe constructed by these poets is strictly private, as arbitrary and exclusive as one's dreams. Nobody needs them. The mind may gain some pleasure from skimming through them. Emotion—and I define emotion here as anything which in some way or another contains judgments of value—finds nothing to react to in these poetc universes. The only thing these poetic efforts accomplish is the deformation of language (in the broadest sense of the term) the exclusion of all social meaning, and its "demagnetization." The disintegration of the bourgeoisie proceeds by oppositions. This tendency of stripping the language of its magnetic qualities and of making it a purely private business is both distinct from and at the same time complementary to the effort being made to detach all meaning from language in order to create a logic free from all verbal associations.

Even before Hugo died bourgeois poetry, castrated of its last revolutionary vigor, had become sterile. Tennyson, Longfellow and Sully-Prudhomme are only eunuchs holding back the public; poetic power still continues to manifest itself only in the "poètes maudites" the "cursed poets" whose typical example is Rimbaud. What moved these poets were no longer the hopes and ideals of a vigorous class dominating life, but the tragic contradictions of a society dominated by a class in a state of latent but irremediable decay. They were not revolutionary, but were only the symptoms of a disease which could be cured only by the revolution. Their poetry was like a boil where the pus-secreting bourgeois decomposition was progressing with a speed and a potential power that gave it an explosive force.

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The profession of a "cursed poet" was not a sinecure. He was a "tragic hero," goat whose role was to be sacrificed for the sins of the tribe. The most authentic of these poets perished in a sense which was far from imaginary. But in perishing they left to their posterity a vaccine capable of being inoculated, and the tragedy that annihilated Verlaine and Rimbaud turned into a piquant relish for the food of the decaying bourgeois. The contrast between the opprobrium in which Rimbaud lived and his posthumous glory among the cognoscenti is the contrast between a time when the death of bourgeois civilization was a spectre which haunted only the most inspired of the Cassandras. The toxines of cursed poetry are inoffensive today and with the majority of poets they have become mere ingredients.

WHAT distinguishes Eliot from all these poets is that with him a rare poetic gift is allied with a social theme of real significance, with, indeed, the sole historically valid and sincere theme accessible to a bourgeois poet of today. Eliot's contemporaries are but manifestations of the death of bourgeois poetry and civilization; he alone has been able to create a poetry of this death.

Eliot's fundamental theme is the only one available to a true poet of bourgeois decadence. For, among other reasons, the true poet owes his qualities as a poet to an understanding, or intuition of historical reality, the understanding being more or less conscious. One might object that the poet has still another choice, that the struggle against a class doomed to disappear might well inspire a poet of the imperialist borgeoisie. Why could not Fascism inspire a poet of Eliot's stature? It is because even before its destruction, the bourgeoisie has lost all that could justify, even in its own eyes, its fight against the ruling class of the future. The bourgeoisie is stripped of values; all living values are on the side of the working class, and if the poet, the ideologist, of the bourgeoisie wants to oppose the Revolution with something positive and convincing (convincing to his own mind) he must have recourse to the resurrection of a medieval ghost, thereby inevitably losing all real value for his contemporaries. The active fight of the bourgeoisie against the revolution is therefore ideologically sterile. Fascism is only pure act (*atto puro*), action without any rational aim, without any justification outside of the mere fact of action. It is a drunkenness which blinds all reason and intelligence and reduces man to a system of reactions sterilized of consciousness. Fascism cannot have its poet and for the contemporary bourgeois poet, Fascism cannot become a theme. There remains for him only the other theme—Death.

This theme goes beyond the individual and is justified historically and socially. It is hardly a popular theme. Therefore the work of a poet whose leit motiv it is ceases to have any "popular appeal." The "private" and exclusive style created by the bourgeois poets of these last decades is, moreover, an excellent means of hiding a bad conscience and of making a virtue out of a necessity.

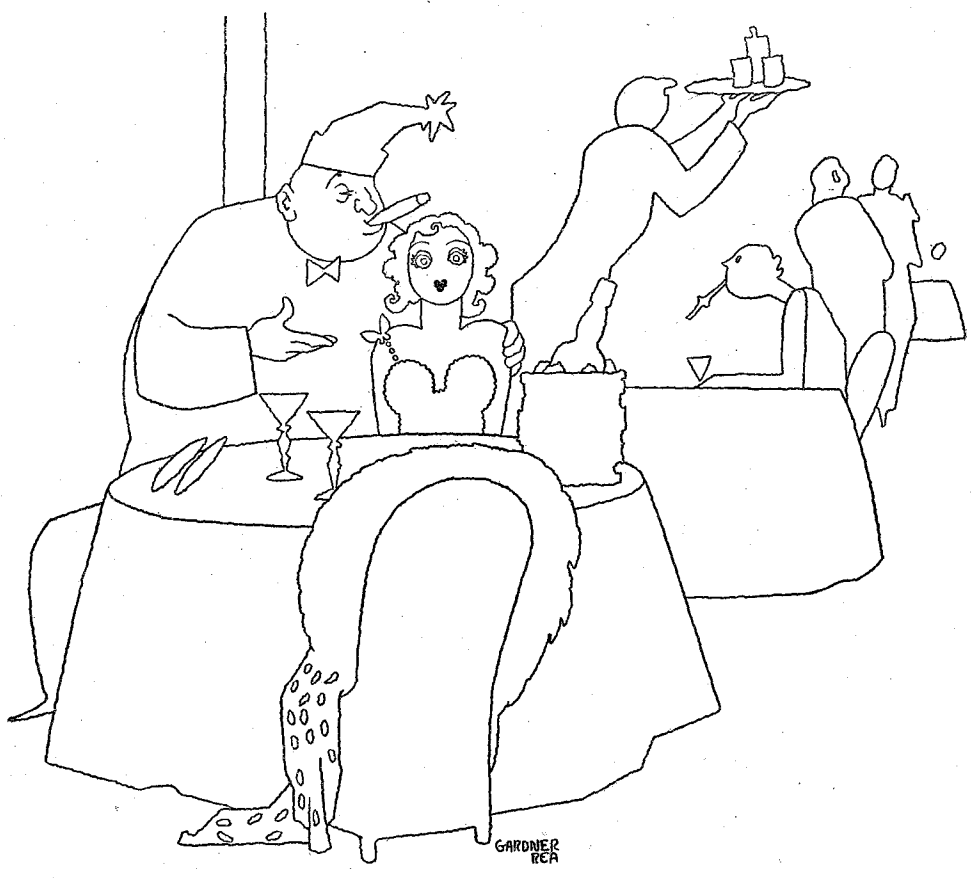
It is interesting from this viewpoint to analyze Eliot's obscurity. Eliot is obscure. He is obscure knowingly, aggressively, and with a vengeance. He militantly defends obscurity—*the poet's right not to be understood.* But his obscurity differs from that of most of his contemporaries. Many other poets force themselves into being incomprehensible because they have nothing to say worth the trouble of being understood. But to Eliot obscurity is a defensive weapon, a means of speaking of esoteric things which ought not to be understood by the vulgar multitude. The substance of his poetry, however, is by no means obscure. The substance of his poetry is a common social experience, an experience summing up on an individual plane an important aspect of the death of a civilization. To speak frankly would have been lacking in modesty and taste. Strong inhibitions have come to his aid and eased his task of making obscure what might have become too clear.

However, a more lucid analysis of his poetry reveals that his obscurity is all external, superimposed, made up of elipses and silences. The underlying basis, the system of his symbols is remarkably transparent and not at all artificial or arbitrary. There is such rigorous order and logic that one can almost class Eliot's work as allegory. *The Waste Land* is entirely centered around three fundamental symbols: Rain, Drought and Fire. The same symbols dominate almost the whole of his work. Obscurity is superimposed on this simple and clear drama. It resides above all in the sequence of images, in this poetically ingenious and disconcerting montage which brings Eliot close to surrealism.

The influence exercised by Elizabethan literature on Eliot is due to a complex play of attractions and repulsions. As the last poet of the English bourgeoisie it is natural that he should be attracted by the golden age of English poetry. But that golden age itself had its elements of decadence, which makes it doubly attractive to him. It was a transition period when the young bourgeois civilization was still entangled with the ultimate expression of medieval decadence. Side by side with a group motivated by a real modern spirit (Bacon and Hobbes are the most striking names) survived another group attached to the church and to feudalism, for whom scholasticism, astrology and alchemy were still vital, living things, and of whom, in poetry, Donne is the most powerful and typical representative.

Eliot's position today is in many respects similar to Donne's three hundred years ago. Donne is an example, rare enough in the past, of a poet endowed with great poetic gifts, but whose theme, however historically valuable it may be, is esoteric rather than popular. But the class to which Donne belonged was not doomed to the same complete destruction as the class to which Eliot belongs. Donne survived by rejecting certain outworn values and adapting them to a new era.

Eliot's kinship with Laforgue is more direct and immediate. The French poet is Eliot's legitimate poetic parent. For that reason the relationship is particularly apparent in Eliot's early work, but practically disappears in his mature work. Laforgue was not one of the



"Listen, Baby, if it was *brains I* wanted, I'd be here with Moley!"

Gardner Rea

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"cursed poets." He was merely one of the epigones of Romanticism. His spirit was not stripped naked by the downfall of all bourgeois values, but was orientated toward a "green paradise" beyond the capitalist inferno. The romantic is the declassed petty bourgeois who still retains the memory of a more idyllic order. He flees the bourgeois world not because he sees its decay and feels its approaching death, but because he sees it strong and stable; because he neither wishes nor is able to adapt himself to the inhospitable world as it stands. For the romantic, the pre-capitalist idyll was a reality; he believed in something tangible. On the other hand his inability to adapt himself to the struggle for life under capitalism was not at all the result of degeneration, of personal insufficiency, it was rather the earmark of a class which did not confess itself defeated and was still full of vitality. A century later, however, the ideal survived only as a dream, and the inability to adapt became identified with personal deficiency, illness, physical impotence.

ELIOT'S commentators make a great deal of his romantic irony which consists of opposing the same action in two keys—the sublime and the sordid. This irony triumphs in the satirical poems of *Ara Vuc Prec;* in *Sweeney Erect,* describing a man calmly shaving himself as he ignores the hysterical contortions of the girl with whom he had just slept, is compared in sublimely oratorical verse to the story of Theseus and Ariane. Again in *Sweeney Among the Nightingales* the plans of a Montmartre bar owner and a whore to rob a patron are used to evoke the conspiracy of Clytemnestra against Agamemnon. And in the third part of *The Waste Land,* the splendor of Queen Elizabeth and her lover Leicester sailing on the Thames is put beside the sordidly tragic loves of the "daughters of the Thames" who live "among the tramways and the dusty trees" and perish below to oil stained surface of the river where boxes of canned food lie scattered on the beach.

All these episodes are doubtlessly to be connected with Laforgue and the romanticism of the decadents. But in the context Eliot gives them it is no longer the irony of contrasts that they evoke. It is no longer the opposition between a similar situation existing in forms of beauty and ugliness, it is a pity and horror toward living reality that is common to both. Heroic love does not serve here to set off sordid love any more than sordid love serves to make heroic love ridiculous.

Rain and Drought are the two fundamental symbols of the cycle which begins with *Geronton* (*Arus Vus Prec*) and whose center is *The Waste Land.* Rain is the symbol of life, sex, the eternal round of the seasons, the entire variety of carnal and physical life, the world of passion and sentiment. But what is essential from a social and historical criticism of Eliot is that the nostalgia of love which dominates the theme of "Prufrock" and which is at times discernible in his later poems gradually transforms itself into a horror of sex and the vital functions, a deep phobia of life which one might describe as integral biological defeatism. *The Waste Land* is built around a skeleton borrowed from comparative religion, around the animistic idea, the eternal resurrection of the vital power of the seasons. The first line sets the tone of the poem, "April is the cruellest month," the cruellest because it gives birth, because it puts an end to the sappy illusion of the end of life which winter symbolizes. The core of the poem is found in the synthetic figure of Tiresias, the man who has been woman, who has thus "fore-suffered" the horror and the pity of the stenographer making love with her young man after a supper on a day-bed, and all other human beings forced to undergo life and its essential expression, the sexual act. The world is imprisoned by the sap of life. And it is even more debased when there are only a few signs of it. That is what I. A. Richards realized when he praised Eliot as the only poet whose world is without beliefs, without ideals, a world deserted and devoid of values.

But what to the humanist and positivist Richards was a "tabala rasa," pleasing to the scientific mind liberated from the prejudices of "practical reason," was for Eliot himself the horrifying and true picture of bourgeois civilization devoid of faith, devoid of hope, devoid of vitality. He tells us himself that *The Waste Land* must not be read as a "personal" and subjective poem, but as a report of a typical experience, of a social experience, as an ode on the death of bourgeois society. In his prosaic moments Eliot is undoubtedly not a "political animal." His recent love for politics is hardly rather unimpressive. His political naivety, in fact, is a class defense weapon as much as the obscurity of his poetry. The poet has shown that the bourgeois says nothing but stupidities. The world of which he is the spokesman is only a desert, dry and sterile, but unwilling to renounce the little life which it still supports.

However, Eliot does not wish to linger in the Waste Land and remain one of its "hollow men." Like the heirs of the "poètes maudites" he wishes to go out of the desert, and like the Rimbaudien Claude he has chosen religion as his star of light. But what he seeks and finds is not the resurrected symbolism, but a definite exit from life, an exit from the evil cycle of the seasons into a land which does not exist. An existence which would have no contact with life—that is what Eliot asks from religion. A religion of pure mind, free from all vitalism, a religion purely pneumatic, mystic in the strictest sense of the term, and also rigorously intellectual. Rejecting all symbolism which could sanctify life, Eliot found in Fire the symbol of what he sought. To the flowers which render the evil forces of life pleasant, to the Drought which only can reduce life to vegetating, he opposes Fire which kills all life-bearing germs, all lust, be it strong or weak, all attachment to the phenomenal and individual world. Arnaud Daniel "refined" by the flames of purgatory becomes the symbol of his ascension towards the Shantih, a term loosely translated as "the peace that passeth all understanding."

Mr. Tubbe's Morning Service

(Homage to T. S. Eliot)

STANLEY BURNSHAW

The priceless Mr. Waldo Tubbe
And all his little Tubbes now dare
Approach the world they long to snub,
Well insulated with despair.

The junior Tubbes accost their sire:
"Haven't the masses gone too far,
Trying to soil *us* with the mire
Of vulgar, droll U.S.S.R.?"

Their ancient sage prepares to speak
In holy numbers presto-pronto:
Fused Hindu-Latin-Chinese-Greek,
The special Tubbey esperanto.

Whereon each pupil makes a wish.
And Bishop Tubbe prepares to drool
A priceless strain of gibberish
Concocted in the learned school.

While all the little Tubbes let pass
Secretions of orgasmic glee.

Tubbe father empties out a glass
Of quintessential poesy

Compounded by rare formulae
Of liquid siftings, while Laforgue's
And ghosts of other live men die
Once more in the scholastic morgues . . .

But not to make small Tubbeys prate,
Hound, or horn him with discontent,
But wait—while father concentrate
In holy philosophic bent;

For he will find them magic toys—
This wizard of the cult, Despair—
Blinders for all his tender boys,
Protective from what's in the air.

While each one sobs in holy pains
Sweet inner masochisms storm,
And Waldo's philosophic strains
Of adolescence keep them warm.

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Hitler's Ersatz Regime

HAROLD WARD

GERMAN FASCISM, that death-agony of a doomed society, has at last shown its true face to the world, confessed its real name. "Ersatz"—substitute: it is appropriate that this word should come out of Germany, where today everything is false but hunger and nothing is real but terror. "Germany Pushing Ersatz Materials," "A Hard Ersatz Winter Faces Germany," "Reich Women don Wood Cloth," "Wood for German Cattle," "Reich in Crisis Hunts Synthetic Raw Materials"—in such terms does the bourgeoisie press salute the achievements of a Government whose rulers confidently (?) anticipate for it a triumph extending through more than thirty generations.

On this subject the facts alone are eloquent. The root of the problem is in two words, "raw materials." Without an adequate supply of the basic food and industrial commodities it is impossible for an already hopelessly crippled German industry to produce essential consumers' goods of the quality, at the price, and in the amounts necessary to maintain a highly rebellious population in comfort, not to mention security. The bulk of these materials *must come from abroad*: the extent of Germany's dependence upon outside sources is indicated by the following table taken from the official Weekly Report of the Institute for Business Research, as of May 30, 1934. The percentage figures refer to the proportion of the total German supply obtained from foreign sources:

Cotton	100 percent
Silk	100 "
Wool	91 "
Flax	83 "
Non-ferrous metals	55 to 72 percent
Heavy industry	60 percent
Leather	60 "

So much for the fantastic Nazi dream of "autarchy" (economic independence), which is further blasted by the fact that German imports increased by over 300,000,000 marks during the past year; that her present supplies of these will only carry her for about six months; and that a costly bureaucratic system of Export and Import Control Boards is necessary in order to maintain even the illusion of economic stability—and that only for the Junkers and those industrialists who have not yet emulated the "enlightened cowardice" of Fritz Thyssen by deserting the ship they are themselves methodically wrecking.

For the 65,000,000 Germans who are left there is—Ersatz: an obscene gray Paradise of Makeshifts, extending from the most elementary needs of daily life to the very dreams they are supposed to enjoy in their slums, barracks, schools, labor and concentration camps. The following are some of the highlights in this Paradise — which may well spread through the world *if* the "planned sabotage" of Imperialism is allowed to run its course.

Food. "Butter" made out of pigs' carcasses soaked in benzine, treated with chemicals, whale oil and soya bean oil is highly recommended by Nazi food experts as a wholesome spread. Earlier styles, employing flour, curdled milk, and potato meal mixed with salt and magnesium sulphate met with difficulties —especially the latter. For coffee there is a choice of brews made from figs, date stones, beans, acorns, beets, chestnuts and turnips; the preferred form is made from roasted malt. Tea is miraculously obtained from infusions of rose, strawberry, blackberry, cherry, acacia and black currant leaves, with hawthorn berries in first place. These, and other synthetic dishes, may be sweetened with saccharine, which is useless as a nutrient, and without value in "preserving" fruits. For more solid food, slaughter-house refuse in the form of sausages is in good favor, and many curious mixtures of maize, wheat, barley, rye and potato meal (suitably seasoned) masquerade as steaks, chops and roasts. German chemists, famed for their ingenuity, even succeeded in "doping" Spanish mackerel so that it made passable stew; and whale meat, properly deodorized, is much appreciated by housewives whose menfolk are out cheering Hitler under the rifles of Storm Troopers. Even the cattle are being attended to: experiments with wood and paper (conducted by Professor Bergius, of synthetic gasoline fame) have resulted in a special kind of fodder which cows can get away with in reasonable comfort. In the long run, of course, all of these trick products will do things to the human organism—to say nothing of the technical problems involved and the high cost of production—which will seriously endanger the glory of the Third Reich.

Textiles. Germany spends for foreign textile materials about one billion marks a year. About a third of that amount is now being diverted to the pursuit of synthetic textiles, with the aid of the Dye Trust (Farbenindustrie). The principal result so far is "vistra," a fiber produced from lumber, somewhat resembling wool in its structure. Mixed with wool it gives "woolstra," a very dubious ersatz for the real wool clothes which Germans are busily hoarding in large quantities; mixed with silk it yields "silkstra"; it also blends with hemp, fiax, jute, shoddy, even cellophane and asbestos. Present production is at the rate of three tons a day, the cost per pound being considerably above that for natural cotton. According to the Institute for Business Research, large scale production of this substance will require such major alterations in the machinery and equipment of the plants as to make the capital expense almost prohibitive. Moreover, it is still necessary to blend it with natural materials: and when so blended it burns more easily, disintegrates more quickly in water, and loses its shape so readily that about the only things worth making out of it will be swastika flags and ceremonial garments for Reichs bishop Mueller and his Aryan Christians. Paper, of course, has been used (in thread form) for tablecloths, upholstery, overalls, curtains, imitation Persian rugs, and even power transmission belts.

Heavy Industries. Germany's large imports of copper, nickel, tin, chromium, tungsten, lead, zinc and antimony (classified as "reserve metals" by the military authorities) are being sharply curtailed—so far as peace-time uses are concerned. Eight hundred and forty industrial products are listed in the manufacture of which it is forbidden to use copper, lead, zinc and quicksilver; aluminum, which the German metallurgists can extract, if necessary, from common clay, is compulsory for alloys used in high power transmission lines, and tin for soldering must be of a 4 percent grade instead of the standard 98 percent. Gold gives place to nickel in the wedding rings of blushing Nazi brides, and as for iron lamp posts, light standards and all available junk sources are commandeered to keep the equipment (if not the workers) of the Ruhr in condition. In her feverish pursuit of home oil wells the Reich has authorized 57 new borings to be made during the next year, payment to come out of higher taxation. Meanwhile synthetic production of oil from coal (Bergius process) is planned on a large scale, despite a cost four times greater than the world price of gasoline: and the powerful Deterding Royal Dutch Shell interests are angling for the distribution monopoly in the country.

But factory production, consumption, employment and the standard of living continue to decline. The German cereal crop is 4,000,000 tons less than last year; unemployment insurance payments declined by 400,000,000 marks in 1933 (the exact amount of the boasted "rise" in wage increases); an employment "increase" of 620,000 workers meant more total hours but smaller "real" wages; the profits of industrial, commercial and loan capital rose by 200,000,000 marks; while the 1,600,000,000 marks increase in the "income" from land and forestry went mostly to the Junkers and rich peasantry. In 1933 the Nazis celebrated their first year of Ersatz Utopia by claiming a prison roster (in Prussia alone) of nearly 57,000—24,000 more than in 1931.

This is the "civilization" against which Hitler's court jester, "Putzy" Hanfstaengl accuses the President of Harvard (ex-War chemist Dr. Conant) of "conducting a clandestine warfare."

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Correspondence

The Plight of the Small Business Man

To The New Masses:

In your October 16, issue you rather gloatingly report the strike of the Bronx drug clerks. Perhaps if you were acquainted with conditions in the drug business your attitude would be more tolerant towards the individual drug store proprietors.

Under the terms of the drug code we are not permitted to sell any drug item less than the price per dozen as listed by the wholesaler, which means that an item costing us $2.40 per dozen cannot be sold for less than 20c each. In order to meet the murderous price cutting of the chains and cut price patent medicine stores we have to sell an item at exactly cost in order to meet competition. The chain stores with greater buying power than the small individual is able to get secret rebates and advertising refunds from the manufacturers which are not accessible to us.

How can a drug store proprietor pay decent wages to a clerk when he himself has to deny both his family and himself the most common necessities of life? Most proprietors have been clerks at one time or other and know very well what the hardships and drudgery of the drug clerk is.

I know there are thousands of drug store proprietors in the United States who work 70 to 80 hours every week and do not make $20 profit, in fact they are continually facing the threat of sheriff sales or eviction.

Don't you think if those 1600 pharmacists devoted their energies towards abolishing our present abominable Capitalist System rather than striking against men who are probably in a worse plight than they are that we would be happier in a short time? Philip Bleecher.

To The New Masses:

May I inquire why there is none who will say a word for the small merchant. I am one, and no form of organization has any room in its councils for us. The attitude seems to be, let the small merchant alone, he is being driven out anyway

Surely there must be some organization which can see great gains in inviting the membership of small merchants. I feel that small business, properly protected, means more to the welfare of the country, than do large and inhuman organizations.

The Socialist Party says join them, but all the time they belabor business, and classify everyone who hires help as capitalist. Partly they are right, but all small merchants do not hire labor.

Is the small merchant a capitalist, when he barely ekes out an existence? Is he a capitalist when he slaves from dawn to midnight? Is he a capitalist when he serves the public all his life, and then the same public makes it very hard for him to exist? What is the answer to be?

You say you appeal to the middle class? Do you include the small merchant? Yet you belabor him. Where does our fault lie? Are we really to become extinct through the terror of big business, unfair competition, unfair party platforms, unfair newspapers and an unappreciative public?

Is there really no one who will take up the fight to save the small merchant, who up to the present has no defender? Abraham Beerman.

Editors' Note

The editors of The New Masses welcome these letters from small merchants. Their case is a desperate one and The New Masses is in no way unmindful of the plight of the small storekeeper faced with ever growing competition from big business interests in the form of chain stores. But one thing must be kept clearly in mind. We are primarily concerned with the wage-and-salary worker and only secondarily with the small employer of labor. But there is no necessary conflict here. It is Mr. Bleecher who creates a conflict between "abolishing our present abominable capitalist system" and striking for decent living wages. The strikes of the pharmacy employes is part of the struggle to abolish the capitalist system. The wage-worker, struggling for decent wages and working conditions, cannot take into consideration the interests of his employer. His business is to work under decent conditions and to get enough money to live on properly. It is the task of whoever employs labor—and the employer of labor is not a philanthropist but is hiring others to make money for himself, whether he succeeds in doing so or not—to be able to pay sufficient wages. But the small business man must see that the same conditions, the same system which is hurting his employes together with all wage workers is likewise steadily forcing him to the wall and lowering his standard of life. Both sides, therefore, must wage a united struggle against capitalism, their common enemy, without precluding the use by the employes of their chief economic weapon, the strike.

Mr. Beerman asks if the small merchant is a capitalist when he "barely ekes out an existence?" The only answer is that he is a capitalist insofar as he has invested money in an enterprise and employs others for the sake of reaping profit. But he is only a small capitalist, oppressed by big capitalists. Though he has a stake in the capitalist system he is at the same time a victim of that system. There is no place here for such moralizing as Mr. Beerman engages in, concerning what small business means to the welfare of the country. The day of exclusively small business is past, never to return. In highly centralized contemporary society there is less and less place for small business. The storekeeper must think, not of the old days when he thrived and could become prosperous (and thereby become a bigger business man) but of the present capitalist system where there is no room for small business. The answer is not to go back, which can mean only reactionary measures and Fascism, but to push forward toward a Communist society where the present small business man can be employed in the capacity for which he is fitted, giving his services to and receiving the benefits of a classless society.

Fascism, financed by the biggest banking and industrial interests appeals to the small merchant class in its effort to build up a mass base. It promises them everything they desire — suppression of the rights of the workers and the abolition of competition by big business. But Fascism cannot fulfil its promises, nor does it intend to do so. It represents the dictatorship of big business and can only intensify the plight of the small owner. In the Soviet Union hundreds of thousands of former small proprietors now work in managing and directing capacities in enterprises in which they have experience and training. The small owner in capitalist society has been performing a socially useful function in production and distribution. It is for that very reason that he need not fear a Communist society for it alone can utilize his capacities and free him from his present ambiguous position between large capitalist enterprises and the interests of the working class. The communist movement even now fights against any tax program that is oppressive to the small business and home owner. It fights for higher wages for the masses of workers who are the customers of the small business man. The small owner of business is caught within a network of conflicting forces and we believe that the Communist program alone offers a solution.

Our answer is, therefore, that we appeal to the small business man but not at the expense of his employes; that we appeal to the small business man not as a business man but as a victim of the capitalist system. The proprietor of a small business must be led to see that capitalism, which promised him everything, can no longer give him anything, and that the only force that can lead the struggle against capitalism is the organized working class. He must be led to recognize that the struggle against big business, cutthroat competition, etc., is the struggle for the abolition of all private business, is the struggle for socialization of the means of production and distribution. Mr. Beerman asks: "Are we really to become extinct?" The only answer is that capitalism must necessarily force extinction upon him, and that Communism alone offers the solution of his difficulties. It does this, however, not by preserving him as an owner of business, but by offering him socially useful work he can perform and the security that only a Communist society can bring, by offering him peace instead of war, full educational facilities for his children, the possibility of fuller cultural development. These things the Communist society can give instead of the insecurity, worry, bankruptcy, lowered standard of living, the "dog eat dog" economics and "morality" of capitalism.

The editors of The New Masses are glad this question has thus been brought before them by small merchants. We are preparing a thorough study of the position of the small business man, the technicians and engineers, and the whole lower middle class. In the meantime we invite discussion on the subject from members of these social-economic groups—The Editors.

Christmas Drive for Prisoners

To The New Masses:

Rose Baron, head of the Prisoners Relief Department of the International Labor Defense, has announced the opening of the 1934 Christmas Drive for funds for the relief of political prisoners and their families.

There are some seventy long term political prisoners and hundreds serving shorter terms behind the walls of Sing Sing, San Quentin, and other jails and penitentiaries throughout the United States. While these men spend years behind bars for crimes which they did not commit, their wives and children are left in destitution and want.

A contribution to the Prisoners Relief Department is not a contribution to charity. It is the duty and the privilege of every honest thinking person to help them. They have given their freedom. We owe them our support.

Contribute as much as you can to the Prisoners Relief Department, 80 East 11th Street, Room 610, New York City. $10 will mean food and warmth to a prisoner's family. It will mean tobacco, newspapers and food to a prisoner in jail. Send clothes and books. Pledge a regular monthly sum so the Prisoners Relief Department can continue to function all year round.

Prisoners Relief Department
International Labor Defense

Report from Topeka

To The New Masses:

A visitor from Pebble Beach, the wealthy community near Carmel, was recently in Topeka.

"How are our friends, the Steffinses and the John Reed people in Carmel," she was asked.

"Oh, Ella Winter has been arrested three or four times but she is out and still stirring up people to fight. I can't see why they don't keep her in jail. When the strike trouble came we just took our yacht and went on a lovely cruise up the Sacramento river until it was all over."

This incident is too good to keep, so I am sending it on to you.

Topeka, Kansas. R. B. Stewart.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

It Still Goes On

DR. HARRY ELMER BARNES of the World-Telegram has been reading church history and has discovered a resemblance between the psychology of the early Christians and that of contributors to THE NEW MASSES. The comparison, which is not altogether original, is based on the violence that Dr. Barnes detects in the polemics of both the Christians and the Communists. I wonder if he has forgotten his own controversies on the subject of war guilt, especially the campaign that, with all the zeal of an Athanasius or a Tertullian, he carried on against Bernadotte Schmitt. Most people, as a matter of fact, get a little excited when what they regard as fundamental issues are at stake, and it is hard to see what is gained by dragging the Book of Jude into the discussion.

Moreover, Dr. Barnes' illustrations of THE NEW MASSES' apostolic fervor are rather strangely selected. He says, for example, "One prominent writer in this journal assaulted the reviewers in the New York Times Sunday Literary section as 'White Guards,' assigned to assassinate any books favorable to Soviet Russia." I am very glad that he read my article on Section Five; I only wish he would read Section Five. In the issues that have appeared since my article was published he could have found a good deal of evidence to support my "assault."

In the issue of September 30, for example, was Alexander Nazaroff's review of the Countess Tolstoy's *I Worked for the Soviets.* Mr. Nazaroff felt that the book lacked "the gripping drama" of his favorite reading, the "unforgettable" *Escape from the Soviets,* but "in the deep sincerity and truthfulness, in the conviction which her story carries, and in the darkness which the picture unfolded by her presents, Alexandra Lvovna's book fully equals the work of her predecessors." Readers of Section Five learned that the Countess, with "no trace of rancor in her tone" and "without bitterness," describes the prison-like atmosphere of the Soviet Union, the wrecking of Russia's educational system, the pregnancy of fourteen-year-old schoolgirls, and the eagerness of the peasants to turn their guns on the Kremlin. The book, to put it briefly, is a powerful piece of evidence in the trial of the Soviet Union at the bar of "the conscience of the civilized world."

In the issue of October 14, Section Five's mysterious expert on Russia, A. M. Nikolaieff, appeared in a new role, as authority on China, reviewing Agnes Smedley's *China's Red Army Marches,* which he did not like. In the issue of October 21, J. Donald Adams lent his solemn approval to Chamberlain's *Russia's Iron Age.* In the issue of October 28, Mr. Nazaroff

—back on page 22, it is true, and with several qualifying phrases—wrote at length and with some satisfaction on Boris Kamyshansky's *I Am a Cossack.*

It still goes on, but Dr. Barnes does not see it. His comment on my article is: "Whether the charge is correct or not, certainly it is only fair to recall that, after the famous exposure of the news published on Russia in the Times which was brought out by Walter Lippmann in the New Republic, the Times has published more valuable and authentic material on Russia than has appeared anywhere else in the English-speaking world." I do not know whether he means that my article may be as fruitful as Mr. Lippmann's or that I ought to have given the Times credit for its Russian news, but let him have the benefit of the doubt. The important thing is that scholarly phrase, "whether this charge is correct or not." Nothing, of course, about the pages of evidence the article contained. Nothing to indicate that the learned doctor has ever read Section Five. Just a good academic bit of hedging.

But note how, when he has occasion to praise the Times, this blushing modesty vanishes. The Times "has published more valuable and authentic material on Russia than has appeared anywhere else in the English-speaking world." Why he qualifies his statement with "English-speaking" I cannot understand.

In general I have the impression that my article on Section Five, "whether the charge is correct or not," does not wholly meet with Dr. Barnes' disapproval, for he continues: "But when this critic sails into the Times reviewer, John Chamberlain, and denounces him as a weak 'straddler,' this is a little too much. Mr. Chamberlain is known best for his book, *Farewell to Reform,* which is a very critical summary of American progressivism and liberalism in the last generation and a forthright relinquishment of any hope in reformist programs." But I did not criticize Chamberlain on the ground that he was a reformist. On the contrary, it is precisely because he pretends to be more than a liberal that he may legitimately be attacked for straddling. If he wrote under some such title as "The Liberal Viewpoint," as Dr. Barnes used to do, straddling would be natural and unexceptionable.

And John Chamberlain's straddling, like Section Five's White Guardism, still goes on. There was a pleasant example in his review of Max Eastman's *Art and the Life of Action* in the Times for October 29. "Granville Hicks," he wrote, "and others who drop frequently into the habit of applying mechanical moralistic criteria to literature might read the first half of Mr. Eastman's book with profit; but others should be warned that Eastman, in his willingness to make out a case against his enemies, overlooks facts that might do his thesis damage." I shall start worrying about my "mechanical moralistic criteria" if Mr. Chamberlain will take the trouble to show me what they are and when and how I have applied them, but for the moment I am concerned with his introducing these criteria to balance the mild rebuke he administers to Max Eastman. A slap on my wrist, a slap on Mr. Eastman's, and everyone is happy.

Dr. Barnes' third example of patristic fervor in THE NEW MASSES is S. Snedden's review of *Challenge to the New Deal,* which he finds "even more reminiscent of the diatribes of the old heresies." He quotes two sentences: "It has been a matter of note that some of the cleverest and most influential enemies of the working-class have been prepared for their careers by a taste at the Marxian spring. The 'little knowledge' of these renegades has indeed turned out to be a dangerous thing—for the masses." He neglects to quote Snedden's next sentence: "It was as 'Marxists' that MacDonald, Mussolini, Briand, and Pilsudski learned to know the nature of capitalist society and were thus equipped to advance themselves in it." That, it appears to me, is a simple statement of fact.

But Dr. Barnes insists that the contributors to *Challenge to the New Deal* are "brilliant left-wing specialists on American civilization today," and that is that. The reviewer should not have pointed out that certain essays are very good, others sadly confused, and others dangerously suggestive of Fascism. Such discrimination, according to Dr. Barnes, gives aid and comfort to capitalism: "So long as the American radicals stick to backstabbing in their own ranks as the great indoor sport the American Bourbons can sit pretty with few grounds for fear."

It would be nice if we could be one big happy family, as Dr. Barnes wants us to be. Unity in the radical movement is enormously important, and I suspect that Communists realize its importance quite as well as the World-Telegram's expert on the history of world civilization. But we happen to believe that unity on the terms, let us say, of Mussolini or MacDonald or even Selden Rodman or A. J. Muste would defeat the purposes for which we and, theoretically at least, all radicals are striving. Dr. Barnes thinks we are wrong, but that can scarcely prevent us from showing, as forcefully and as clearly as possible, why we are right.

The growth of a revolutionary movement is a strange thing. Primarily created by economic forces, it receives its apparent stimuli from all sorts of sources. Even Dr. Barnes may help to make a revolutionary now and then. I know one young man who became interested in the Communist Party, which he

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subsequently joined, as a result, so far as he could tell, of reading "The Liberal Viewpoint."

But he would not have become a Communist if Communists had refrained from criticizing Barnes and his ideas; he would have stayed right where Barnes is. The sharpening of the class struggle goes on day by day. It is no longer enough to be vaguely against capitalism; it is necessary to be clearly and wholeheartedly for revolution. Those who stand resolutely and openly for the existing order cannot be influenced and need not be exposed. Exposure is for those who conceal hostility under a guise of impartiality, and criticism for those who divert the energies of the revolutionary movement into unprofitable channels. If this is the spirit of the Book of Jude, so much the better for the Book of Jude.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

From the Other Side of the Tracks

THE DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE and other stories, by William Saroyan. Random House. $2.50.

THERE is one striking feature in this, the first book of William Saroyan; it is the work of a young man who comes from the other side of the tracks—and is proud of it. His proletarian ancestry flashes through in the perfervid quality of his writing; he is perturbed, often excited, at times violently passionate about these times. Although he has not read the Communist thesis that this era is inevitably productive of another "round of wars and revolutions" he feels it in his bones. Unlike the writers who hail from the middle-class he takes things to heart. He produces clear images of present-day America and he does it in bright, biting words. His writing is free of that fog of unreality one finds in middle-class writers to whom this age seems idiotically melodramatic, with its processions of Swastikas and its Hammers and Sickles, its alarms and reverberations of riots and wars. Reality is ever melodramatic to those out of a cloistered upbringing. Saroyan has evidently lived close to hunger—the basic reality of our times. He is, however, too much given to studying Life and Death and the other words in capital letters. He remains unclear concerning the plebeian words: wage-cuts and wage-scales, strikes, machines, and their relationship to the fancy words—how they determine the Eternal Verities he so diligently pursues.

Saroyan, we learn in the title story, hears the "tap dancing of doom." His dreams are troubled with whirls of "Karl Franz, black Titanic, Mr. Chaplin's weeping, Stalin, Hitler, a multitude of Jews" and the fact that "tomorrow is Monday, no dancing in the streets." His stories reveal he has not the least notion how "the hungry people marching in a parade" can be set to dancing in the streets. And I finished the book with what might be called qualified enthusiasm. "Enthusiasm," for having encountered a brave young workingman who derives from our people, the poor and the hungering and who writes exceedingly well; "qualified," because he does not himself understand the mainsprings of the environment which bore him.

Although advertised as a short-story writer, Saroyan does not write "the short story." It seems to me a sort of personal essay; it has a quality akin to that of popular columnists today. He buttonholes the reader, and talks to him. Some may find that quality objectionable; I, for one, do not. It is that personal quality one enjoys so much in reading a columnist like Mike Gold, in the Daily Worker. When you finish this book you not only see a few things that are going on hereabouts these days, but you also know what William Saroyan feels about it. I have no objection to this except when Saroyan becomes *too* personal—when he becomes flippant. In *70,000 Assyrians* he warns you, "I am writing a very serious story, perhaps one of the most serious I shall ever write. That is why I am being flippant. Readers of Sherwood Anderson will begin to understand what I am saying after a while; they will know that my laughter is rather sad." Despite this, he launches into a first rate "short story" where you feel his burning concern for his fellows of 1934. He stands slyly watching "Iowa" a young American Bezprizorni, jobless, drifting wherever there is talk of work. Later Saroyan thinks: "People with money laughing at the death that is crawling slyly into boys like young Iowa, pretending it isn't there, laughing in warm theaters. I have prayed for Iowa, and I consider myself a coward. By this time he must be dead and I am sitting in a small room, talking about him, only talking." He is coming to realize that talk, literature, even masterful literature, is not enough. The letter he sent to THE NEW MASSES indicates that. "If I have any desire at all," he says in *70,000 Assyrians,* "it is to show the brotherhood of man." But though his terms reveal his lack of clarity, they also reveal his abundance of sympathy, of warm youthful love for the masses. For he means the brotherhood of worth-while men, the producers of life; not the brotherhood of the producer and the exploiter; the wolf and the lamb.

When he has a mind to write the "straight" short story such as the one titled *Love* he does as craftsmanlike a job as any admirer of Hemingway or the earlier Anderson could demand. Similarly when he sets to etching a character: in *Harry* he gets off an American go-getter type as vivid as the fez of a 32nd degree Mason. He strikes some shrewd blows in this story; the scene of financially-independent Harry on his death bed with T.B. trying to sell life insurance to those few friends who visit him, is not to be forgotten in a hurry.

He is ever pre-occupied with the under-dog; in *Among the Lost* his characters ask, "Do you think we'll ever get jobs?" And he moves

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among them, tender, eager to aid, vastly concerned about these youngsters who "have no present, no future," who "belong nowhere" and are "suspended between day and night, waiting . . . the country perishing . . . all the young men waiting, hunger marchers. . . ."

In *Myself Upon the Earth,* he wonders how it has happened that man's "solitude has been destroyed, his Godliness herded into a hideous riot of murder and destruction?" And it's beyond him. He casts about for theories and he falls for one that could, if logically followed through, throw him into the hands of the Fascists. Maybe machinery is responsible? He yearns for earlier days, other times. "I regard all machinery as junk, the adding machine, the automobile, the railway engine, the airplane." He fails to understand this: not the machine, but its owner, is the culprit. He does not grasp that the machine in the hands of "Iowa" could build a Dnieperstroy in America. In this story he reveals his proletarian hatred for war: "I despise myself because I cannot single-handed annihilate the notion of destruction which propaganda awakens in man . . . when multitudes of men are hurt to death in wars, I am driven to a grief which borders on insanity." But his attitude is pacifistic; he does not know how serious a business it is to fight against war. He returns to this troublesome theme in *Why Don't You Fight Your Own War*—an effective allegory which perhaps more than any other of his stories, reveals him. It indicates further his hatred of war and also, his confusion as to war's causes. The man who notifies him he is wanted on the front line trenches does so in the name of "the International League for the Preservation of Democracy and the Annihilation of Fascism, Bolshevism, Communism and Anarchism." When he resists with a plebeian uppercut and is dragged off to the wall all he can think is "Why in hell don't you bastards fight your own war, you old fogies who destroyed millions of men in the last war, why don't you fight your own God damn wars. . . ."

It is not enough to classify the war-makers by vintage and disposition. When Saroyan fully understands who the war-makers are, when he sees the inevitability of mass destruction in this capitalist pattern of life, his terms will be more specific. But he should first of all clear himself of the notion that all terms ending in "ism" are somehow interlocking, even interchangeable. His indiscriminate coupling of Fascism, Bolshevism, Communism and Anarchism indicates his confusion. Earlier in the book, in the preface, he writes of his style as being the Festival or Fascist method of composition, whatever that may be. Most obviously he is still unclear concerning political and economic realities; and this unclarity will inevitably affect his future writings.

Saroyan has great promise: both as a writer and a warrior on the side of the future. He has already achieved considerable stature as the one, his honesty must bring him far as the other. He is, I am certain, making a vigorous effort to clear up the confusion born of insufficient association with the books and the people of the Revolution. As we said the other day in commenting on his letter to THE NEW MASSES: "And may he soon learn that not only is honesty necessary in a proletarian writer but also the serene wisdom and courage of Lenin and Maxim Gorky."

JOSEPH NORTH.

Waldo Frank's Unceasing Quest

THE DEATH AND BIRTH OF DAVID MARKHAND, by Waldo Frank. Scribners. $2.75.

WALDO FRANK is one of the very few American writers whose career has been something more than a hop, skip and jump from one book to another. From *Our America* and *The Dark Mother* to *The Rediscovery of America* and the present novel, he has been trying to say something that is all of a piece, to approach his material as a whole man, to apply the touchstone of a coherent vision to the chaos of life in the United States in our time. It is this passionate and unceasing quest for truth—whatever our criticism of that quest and that truth may be—which has always marked Frank apart from the majority of his irresponsible and clever contemporaries. And it is this search for wholeness, the need of every honest man to come to an understanding with himself and his society, that is the theme of *The Death and Birth of David Markhand.*

In 1913 David Markhand felt pretty much as the young Buddha may have felt before he experienced poverty, disease and death; it was all a little too good to be true. Markhand had wealth, social position, a wife whom he loved, children he adored. Yet something was eating him up. His wife had found refuge from her inner discontent in the Catholic Church; Markhand kisses her goodbye—after getting another child under way—says so long to money and the moneyed crowd, and walks out of his house and out of his office into the great unplumbed America of Waldo Frank's dreams.

(Ten years later Sherwood Anderson was ending his novels at this point; twenty years later Frank makes it a point of beginning.)

From 1913 to 1917 Markhand wanders over the face of the land experiencing things, and if you want to know what things he experienced consult the files of The Seven Arts and Alfred Stieglitz's magazine and The New Republic for that period; consult John Dewey and Randolph Bourne and of course Waldo Frank himself. The splendid American renaissance was at hand, only the dawn was to prove itself a dud and the singing of the birds at daybreak the croaking of the frogs at sundown. The lovely Walter Lippman dawn was really the twilight of the liberal gods and somehow Markhand comes to see this by 1917, which puts him at least thirteen years ahead of some of his contemporary intellectuals and at least a thousand years ahead of most of them. By 1917, Markhand, ex-business man, ex-liberal, is able to stand by the graves of two proletarian martyrs and to say: "I will be like you. I will do like you . . . I embrace your class. All men who want to live today must embrace it. My own life needs it to live. I have only the dead body of a class that dies; I need, that I may live, the living body of the class which now is life."

It is obvious that Waldo Frank has indulged in a trick of foreshortening here, skipping the years between then and now, to get his hero in this frame of mind as far back as 1917. Frank himself was not ready for such new orientation at that time, and certainly the class David Markhand represented was not ready. It took the fat empty years of the boom and the lean full years of the depression to accomplish that. How un-ready Markhand was, and how empty his gesture, may be deduced from the fact that, having made it, he returns to his wife and home, presumably to go to sleep for more than another decade. I do not say that Waldo Frank himself slept through that period, but the record of his books shows a purely religious quest that has very little to do with the acceptance of the class struggle and the proletarian philosophy. You can put two and two together until doomsday but it will never make five;

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no more will David Markhand's religious flagellations and flights of erotic mysticism bring one to the barricades on the side of the working-class. Experience shows just the opposite to be true.

As the blind Isaac said: the hand is the hand of Karl Marx, but the voice is the voice of Waldo Frank. Frank has tried to picture in terms of a spiritual quest—if his erotic mysticism can be called spiritual—what cannot properly be understood except in terms of the materialist dialectic. It is for this reason that we do not fully believe in David Markhand nor in his search for truth nor in his conversion at the graves of the two working-class comrades. There may be a single symbol for the unity of Spinoza and Marx—as I believe Frank insists there is. But that symbol is not the City of God.

EDWIN SEAVER.

Tear Out the Text

I PHOTOGRAPH RUSSIA, by James E. Abbe. McBride. $3.

THERE are exactly 80 photographs and some 300 pages of text in this book. It took fifteen minutes to tear the book apart, leaf by leaf. The reviewer did it with a sharp knife. It had occurred to him all of a sudden that pictures don't lie; and since the pictures were good as pictures go, and the text was vile, why not keep the pictures.

Out of the 80 pictures of life in the Soviet Union, just six might possibly be interpreted as unfavorable reporting. But, out of the 324 text pages in the book, there is not one which fails to slander the people of the Soviet Union. This is the make-up of a book recommended by The Book of the Month Club.

But there is more to be said about the outward appearance. The skillful deceit of its make-up which is directed toward enticing at the same time both the friends and the enemies of the U. S. S. R., is perfectly amazing. And it is only bettered by the sheer vulgarity of the text.

The author boasts of his intimacy with Duranty, Knickerbocker, Lyons, and with a number of well-known authors from Elmer Rice down. His book will undoubtedly embarrass these "friends" of his. Whatever may be said about their failure to understand the dialectic changes that are stirring across the face of the world, whatever might be said about their petty bourgeois petty dislikes of the Soviet Union, still they are men with a craft. Even in their distortions they are craftsmen. What then can such men feel about the following gem of cheap sensationalism: a picture of the street lined with soldiers through which the funeral of Stalin's wife is to pass, photographs of which have been forbidden, according to the author. This is the caption: "Below soldiers; on every roof (not shown—P. B.) sharpshooters with leveled rifles. Orders were to fire if a window were opened." But he took fifteen pictures without being fired at. "I took fifteen chances on my life in taking as many shots from the Grand Hotel."

The book reeks of this. One feels that he had got orders to "play things down" and "to play up other things." In the best tabloid tradition, he calls the people, "Bolos" whenever something is hard to play down—like a school for orphans, or the excellent Soviet Theatre.

The anti-semitism that expresses itself in envious and spiteful tributes to Jewish cunning is another of the author's reactionary characteristics: "The whole world knows that when you get in an awful jam with the law you either get a Jewish lawyer or wish you had." James W. Gerard and the army of sneaks lately exposed in Spivak's articles will no doubt find the following quotation useful in their anticipation of pogroms: "It (the Soviet Union) had to turn to the Jews . . . 75 percent of the men who made the Russian Revolution were Jews . . . Jewish minds do the quick thinking in Soviet Russia today and in the Communist Party the world over. And Litvinov and Co., Great Lubyanka Street, Moscow, is the main office of a system of political chain stores which girdle the globe."

A true press prostitute, the author caters to every reactionary impulse. Perfectly unscrupulous in his desire to arouse the hatred of the religious who might read this book, whether it be Jew or Gentile, this is his caption for a picture of an exhibit in the anti-religious museum: "Jew as well as Christian has had his temple defiled, his altars 'liquidated'. Here is a collection of sacred Jewish relics figuring among other 'superstitions' in an anti-religious museum." But, as an aside to the Christians he captions the picture of Comrade Smirdovitch, director of anti-religious activities, "the Atheist-Jewish 'Red Pope'; and elsewhere, the 'Soviet Anti-Christ'."

Intelligent and well bred adherents of our present society must shrink from such a protagonist. For sheer vulgarity, it would be hard to match the following even in our tabloids: "I made a tour of the Moscow home for ex-bomb throwers and of their country mansion." The chapter is headed, "Red Aristocracy." He is speaking of the Home for Old Bolsheviks! Welcomed hospitably by these old heroes of revolution, this is his sneering response: "I photographed him (the old gardener) with a guest bomb-thrower from France . . . who had taken an active part in the Paris Commune and who proudly showed me a photostatic copy of his prison record in France."

In this chapter on "Red Aristocracy," as elsewhere he exposes his flunkey soul; of the Director of the Soviet Horse Trust whom he meets at the race-track, he says: "The Director himself showed signs of a strain of blue blood."

Through the usual innuendos about bureaucracy, famine and the rest of the calendar of capitalist wish fulfillments, significant truths come to the surface, partly through the density of the author who does not realize their significance, and partly because of the policy of the book to offer a come-on to all customers. On his way to the mines, he stops at a Ukrainian town. The supposed famine of 1932-33 provides him with an occasion for the usual slanders; but he reports these questions which the workers asked of our author: "Is it true that Russian anthracite is better than American?" Can anyone imagine such a question from an American mine-slave living in a company town? Not only do these starving miners ask about the quality of American coal, but they want to know "How is the World Revolution progressing?" as one of them put it.

After dark intimations over the risks he was taking, going down into a Soviet mine, this is his report: "We visited one mine after another, with impressive new villages built around the tipples, schools full of well-fed children, modern hospitals and dental clinics; there were shower baths in the locker rooms at the top of the mine shaft, technical institutions, etc."

PAUL BERN.

The Belloc Saga

A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND, by Hilaire Belloc. Macmillan. $4.
OLIVER CROMWELL, by Hilaire Belloc. Lippincott. $4.

HILAIRE BELLOC has written novels —and more often than he has let his readers know. For sometimes he calls his novels biography or history.

A certain group of such books of his are closely related. They really form part of his magnus opus, an extensive saga which he solemnly refers to as the history of England. I can think of eleven volumes of it that have already been published: *William the Conqueror, Wolsey, Cranmer, James II, Charles I, Oliver Cromwell,* four volumes of a still incomplete work called the *History of England,* and *A Shorter History of England* which, in the main, is a condensation of the previous works.

Like Cabell, Belloc has created a mythology of his own, only Belloc's is more sombre, and no doubt contains more trappings and odd pieces from reality. The main theme (which Belloc, an ardent Catholic, regards as a tragedy) is the destruction of the feudal Catholic Church. A few wicked men, like T. Cromwell, because they were wicked destroyed the power of this church. Some good people, like James II, because they were good tried to restore it.

To achieve this mythology Belloc, of course, grossly violated historical facts. He not only, in large part, fashioned his own characters, but the plot itself. To picture the Catholic Church as eternally suitable he ignored its feudal character. He ignored the existence of a middle-class in whose way it stood. Instead of seeing the Reformation as the in-

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evitable climax of the middle-class' rise, its sweeping away of feudal impediments, in his view the reformation is the casual outcome of the wickedness of a few individuals. He works up to this by steadily minimizing the power of Parliament, organ of the middle-classes. From its beginnings to the reformation he baldly ignores Parliament's tremendous influence in shaping the policy of the crown. In the Reformation itself he summarily dismisses it as the passive instrument of the few sinners, despite the leading role it played in pushing through the whole change.

When Belloc discusses the civil war period of the seventeenth century he continues his mythology. The hero becomes the king, Charles I, who carries on the Stuart attempt toward catholicism, a policy which reaches its culmination when his son, James II, for attempting to restore the Catholic Church, was forced from the throne. Charles, in Belloc's breathless phrase, is the "sacred Monarch," not yet by any "wise man . . . given . . . his due praise." All his chief supporters belong to the good men; for example Strafford, "the greatest and most loyal of Englishmen." All against the king are put in a bad light; for example Pym, who "stands forever responsible to England for Strafford's blood." Cromwell, in the new book, is not treated so harshly as one might expect, but still harshly enough. He "murdered" "poor Charles"; but despite this horrible crime and the great sea of blood he unloosed, he "died . . . having accomplished nothing permanent, not even the destruction of the Irish people."

But as a historian Belloc sins most in his complete failure to understand the class nature of the civil war. Instead of making Charles the ally of the feudal class against the commercial men, which he was, Belloc glorifies him as the "nation in the flesh," as the representative of "the people against a faction." He refuses to associate the Stuart cause, which tended toward catholicism, with the feudal class. For that would link the Catholic cause to feudalism, which Belloc through all his saga seeks to avoid.

But as a matter of fact Belloc's defense of the old Catholic Church is a defense of the old feudal past. His whole lugubrious saga amounts to a protest, in the name of that past, against the inevitable rise of the commercial men.

DONALD MORROW.

Book Notes

THE book trade publishers' code is not only promulgated, it has already "gone into effect." Three companies have just increased working hours from 35 to 40 hours. Others are reported to be following in line.

The Literary Trades Section of the Office Workers' Union is demanding a rehearing on the code which was put through not only without consultation with workers' representatives, but with broken promises made to the union and evasive and misleading answers to union inquiries. Petitions for a rehearing are being circulated among publishing employes, bookstore employes, and writers. Readers of these columns are urged to sign these petitions and help to circulate them. Copies of the petition may be secured from the Office Workers' Union, 504 Sixth Avenue.

The first group of these petitions, signed by employes of some ten publishing houses, were taken to Washington by a delegation of Macaulay workers and sympathizers. Included in the delegation as a committee of authors were Mary Heaton Vorse, Kenneth Burke, Nathan Asch, Edward Newhouse, Slater Brown, and Emerson Gilmore.

The White House now has a library. It is a gift from the American Booksellers, and was presented with ceremony and pomp. Three authors were included in the committee, but the standard observed in their selection was big money. They were authors of *Anthony Adverse, The Good Earth,* and *Only Yesterday*. The other members of the presentation committee were the President of the National Association of Book Publishers, the president of the American Booksellers Association and the editor of the trade paper, Publishers' Weekly.

The occasion has served for another Coolidge anecdote. When the Coolidges arrived in the White House they found on the shelves a set of bound volumes of Blackwood's Magazine. These were packed away and stored in the attic. When the Coolidges moved out of the White House they took with them the books they had brought with them and the books sent them during their stay and put back on the shelves the old copies of Blackwood's Magazine.

Mary Pickford has written a book. It is called *Why Not Try God?* Apparently Miss Pickford did not think of God until the talkies came in. We hope she will have better luck with God than with Love and Fame; but we cannot wish her luck in the project of trying out God on others at $1 per copy.

Herbert Gorman was once one of America's literary hopes, an expositor of James Joyce, a guide to the intracacies of modern literature. The guide has found his way—to what? To a success as a writer of lurid romances. The latest is *Suzy,* which is advertised in these terms "Born Suzan Dillworthy, reared in America and seduced in a suburb of London, Suzy becomes one of the great cocottes of the war days in Paris."

It is curious that the three publishing houses dignified with the names of great writers, Carlyle, William Godwin and Macaulay should be the producers of the cheap anti-literature that debauches the American reading public, flooding the market with such vulgarities as *Hand Made Lady, The Professional Virgin, Ten Little Virgins,* etc.

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MEETING AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

Speakers:

JOHN L. SPIVAK
WILLIAM BROWDER
PAUL PETERS

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November 21, 1934
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LECTURE BY
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on
"Why Should the Jews Survive?"
Friday Evening, November 16, 1934
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SEX
Attitudes as Factors in
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by
DR. FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS
auspices:
DAILY WORKER
Medical Advisory Board
Admission 25c
WED. NOV. 14
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IRVING PLAZA
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Tragedy in the Bowl

ROBERT FORSYTHE

IN MY RESEARCHES into the semi-cultural manifestations of the upper classes I have come upon a curious phenomenon known as college football. Naturally the sport is no stranger to me because I was once a movie critic and have seen as many last minute touchdowns by Frank Merriwell as anyone of my years but I was rather astonished at what is still to be discovered in such archaeological excavations as the Yale Bowl. The world may change but football remains the contest played by teams of eleven men and attended by patrons who sit in the stands and drink out of bottles and utter plaintive, defiant and meaningless sounds at intervals.

For those who have not been able to get the raccoon coat out of pawn, I may report that the cheer leaders are as agile and acrobatic as ever and the treasurers remain harassed by thoughts of the interest in the stadium bonds. What has happened in the interval between my academic training and my return to the scene of battle has been an access of frankness. When Harvard some years ago scheduled a game with Centre College of Kentucky, there was a disposition to stress the cultural results to be expected from contact with the finer flowers of the Blue Grass section. In the course of the yearly seminars, it developed that Centre had a team known as the Praying Colonels which practically chased the Harvard team into the Charles River and filled the stadium to the brim but unfortunately the fine educational alliance was to wither after two years because either Centre had sucked Harvard dry culturally or Centre has ceased to be a football attraction.

When I went up to New Haven last Saturday I was thinking not so much of these things as how to get through Westport. It is plain that New York will never be attacked from the north by land unless the invaders are content to march in single file through Connecticut. If Communism could do no more for Connecticut than capitalism has done, we should be glad to trade the place back to the Indians and throw in Jasper McLevy for bad measure. However, the journey made it possible not only to view the hot dog stands of lower New England but to see our fellow citizens who were also bent on reaching New Haven by nightfall. With my usual good fortune I managed to see a gentleman who could only have come out of an early cartoon by F. Opper. He weighed upward of 300 pounds and he wore a fur coat and he lolled on the back seat of his limousine like somebody posing for Carl Sandburg's poem—*Chicago, Hog Butcher of the World*. After the experience with the paunchy gentleman who jingled the coins while hearing Lucienne Boyer at the Little Theatre and the honorable sir just described, I am at the call of any radical illustrator who needs help with his critics.

The game itself was a tragedy. Dartmouth has never beaten Yale and multitudes had come down from the hills of New Hampshire with their hearts full of hope. The weather turned warm and many of the young gentlemen stood about in their fur coats with tears running down their faces and perspiration down their spines. It was a sad thing and one could only hope that Jehovah would relent in his determination to chasten the brethren from the mountains. The final score was Yale, 7; Dartmouth, 2, which might be accepted as an indication of God's affection for New Hampshire.

As I sat waiting for the kickoff I was reminded of the dream which always haunts me at the beginning of a football game. It has to do with a conflict in dates and confusion in the shifting of railroad trains. Instead of Dartmouth I was quite prepared to have The University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn., trot out upon the field. As far as the Dartmouth stands were concerned, they might well have preferred it. As I looked about me at the tortured faces, it was easy to see why Kipling is the favorite poet of American graduating classes and Herbert Hoover the favorite President. There were aged ladies and gentlemen suffering acute agonies from what was happening before them.

There were individuals about me who undoubtedly are interested in things more vital than another defeat for Dartmouth, but I believe it would be safe to say that the deaths in the textile strike meant far less to the assembled multitude than a blocked kick behind the goal line. Strangely enough, it is possible to have thoughts while attending to the important business of sport and I could think of the headline in the Saturday papers which reported that the horse show at Madison Square Garden was to break all records with an entry list of 1,400 horses. I could think also of the recent news story to the effect that the tonnage in private yachts in American waters was the largest in history.

And this, by the oblique way the human mind works, brought me to another thought which I should never have countenanced in the Yale Bowl. It had to do with a trip I made several weeks ago to an industrial town in Pennsylvania where I once lived, but it also had to do with football. The young lads of that town were extremely college-conscious and only one of the bunch who played football in high school managed to go further. The others went into the steel works, which at that time was paying 13½ cents an hour for 10½ hours a day. The night shift was 13½ hours with twenty minutes out for midnight lunch. But we had a football team which went under a fake preparatory school name, practised under the arc light on Friday night and played our games on Saturday afternoon.

Prominent on the team was a young fellow named Luke, who was a fine player. Of all of us he felt most keenly the fact that he never got to college. He played football for years after I left town, dressing in collegiate style, following all the prep school players and college stars and doing everything but matriculating. Instead of that he became a good machinist. When I saw him three weeks ago the world seemed to have fallen in on him. He had just lost his home after paying on it for twelve years. When I found him he was sitting in an apartment which he had rented with the money of another boy from that team. He was sitting in the dark, without lights, without money, without water. It was necessary to post a $10 deposit for lights. For water the same deposit was required.

I'm afraid I became sentimental about it, as I thought back on such things while waiting in the Bowl for the teams to come out for the second half. Everything seemed so pleasant and settled in that crowd of fur coated ladies and gentlemen. The sun was shining, the bands were down on the field going through their maneuvers and the cheering sections were alive with old grads meeting other old grads and young ladies taking swigs out of bottles. Outside the cars were parked in thousands.

The head well up, Forsythe, I said to myself, and none of these doleful memories. Are we to forget that there is youth in the world and valor and excitement and $3 seats and stadium mortgages to be met just as your young friend failed to meet his? As a matter of truth, he probably prefers the apartment without water and without light. There is nothing quite so romantic as a meal by candle light. If he had gone to college instead of to the steel works, he might now be out of work entirely and forced to live with the folks at Southampton. The fact that his pay check for the two weeks preceding Christmas last year was $2.10 is only an indication of the amusing things that can happen and in some ways it is comparable to the stock brokers who have had to forego Peggy Hopkins Joyce. After all the Law of Compensation is a pretty good old law. My friend may be out of food but think of the state of mind of the Dartmouth student body and alumni. They have never beaten Yale in the Bowl. They have never beaten Yale at all.

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The Theatre

EVERYTHING is relative, I said to my friend, bitterly aware of the wisdom of my words. To a hungry man, a 5c frankfurter surpasseth a filet mignon in the mouth of Doris Duke. Sean O'Casey's play may be a measly, metaphysical, obscure mélange to a stickler for monosyllabic realism, but the play surpasseth in beauty, wit, and sundry other departments anything else I've seen this year.

I suppose this relativity business is like praising with faint damns, or patting little Rollo on his cheeks for not hitting his mother when she's down, but my sentiments are really more genuine than this. True, I wondered why Mr. Atkinson of the N. Y. Times had to go to the extent of saying, "Let us face this boldly, Sean O'Casey has written a great play in *Within the Gates.*" No one, as far as I knew, was going to put the critic in a concentration camp for talking so big. I would point out that Mr. Atkinson gives the appearance of being more discriminating than brave, even though I cannot concur that a frankfurter is the same as a filet mignon just because a fellow has had nothing to eat.

It seems to me that I stand somewhere between The New York Times and The Daily Worker, for the critic of the latter was just as bold in calling the play worthless. And if anybody wants to finish this review for me, let him step up to be greeted with Hozannas, for Mr. O'Casey's play is a tough assignment for anyone who has a week to think it over.

Let me draw up a balance sheet. On the wrong side there are the trite conceptions of play and characters. Everyone is in the play, from the Rev. Davidson (The Bishop) to Sadie Thompson (The Young Whore). Nor is there new insight into any of these major symbols. The play or spectacle or what you will concerns itself with the conflict between the reckless insecurity of living and the respectable safety of Mother Church and Park Avenue (or Grosvenor Square as the case may be). The ancient strife between Science and Religion for the faith of Man is portrayed. There is also the Whore's choice 'twixt the lover (The Dreamer) and the Salvation Army Officer and The Bishop.

About these symbols, I have no fight with Mr. O'Casey. Though they be old, they are richly drawn and in place. But with the symbol of The Down and Outers I have no patience. Are they the hungry, the debt-ridden and the homeless? No. According to the author, they are the "symbols of all who are dead to courage, fortitude and the will to power." There is no symbol in the play for the homeless and the hungry. Even the Chair Attendants in Hyde Park (where the play takes place) who lose their jobs and are left to sleep on the grass they once tended "are wasting life by living it."

Apart from what one may think of Mr. O'Casey's philosophy of life, a morality play like his is justified only insofar as it includes a world-encompassing view. His omits the whole mass of men on whose shoulders rests the world, and even from the standpoint of the theatre, *Within the Gates,* cannot be fully justified. And Mr. O'Casey's philosophy of life must be placed where it belongs; among the souvenirs of Nietszche, and along with those who face backward wistfully scanning the past in search of never-never times and dead places when life was simple, and a way could be made for "the strong, and the swift, and the fearless."

On the brighter side of the balance sheet is the fine humor of the play, the masterly dialogue, the incisive satire, and the overwhelming beauty of many of its speeches. Mr. O'Casey has not forgotten the corruption of the church and those who live on it. Nor has he failed to note the betrayal of the soldier dead. He has taken off with brilliant malice the Main Street Einsteins whose heads are buggy with scientific vulgarizations. With the sharpest satire the theatre has seen he has cauterized conventional morality, in many of its forms, the newspaper, love making, religion, etc. He has denounced with great poetry the greatest imperialism since Rome.

> There can be nor rest nor work nor play where there is no life, and the golden infancy of England's life is tarnishing now in the bellies of the worms.
>
> Your politics are husks that only swine will eat; your power's behind a battlement of hunger; your religion's as holy as a colored garter round a whore's thigh; truth's bent in two and hope is broken.

If you're looking for some suggestion of what kind of a story *Within the Gates* tells, read no more. It is as diffuse as the crowd which wanders through Hyde Park or Central Park. The slender tale of the spiritual wanderings of The Young Whore is shaded and underscored by O'Casey's running commentaries on the ways and means of life. Each character is a comment, and each speech an integral part of the author's metaphysic.

Within the Gates is not "a great play," and it is not a "worthless" one. Comparing it with Mr. O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars,* I would say it was inferior to them. However, both in intent and execution, it looms far ahead of anything now playing north of the Civic Repertory Theatre (not including Artef on W. 48th Street).

No balancing of this ledger would be complete without including the superlative acting of Lillian Gish, Moffat Johnson and Bramwell Fletcher; the direction of Melvyn Douglas; and the music of Milton Lusk and A. Lehman Engel. MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

Other Current Shows

Red Vodvil Night. Civic Repertory. An interesting and gay evening sponsored by New Theatre Magazine. Among the memorable items: *A Night Off,* scene from the anti-Nazi play by Friederich Wolf, forcefully acted by Unity Theatre; *Oh Yeah,* by the Ukrainian Drama Group, impressive despite the language barrier; and the puppet skit *Newsboy's Dream,* by the Bunins. Also music (Degeyter Quartet, Italian Workers' Chorus), art (Del), dance (Delza) and a new skit *The Hundred-Per-center.* Enough reason not to miss the next New Theatre night—November 25, all dance program by the Workers' Dance League.

Stevedore. Civic Repertory. The most important play in town. If you've missed it be sure to go before Nov. 25 when it takes to the road.

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Music

An all-Bach Recital

JAMES FRISKIN played the entire second book of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier,* composed of twenty-four preludes and fugues, at his recent Town Hall recital. The very nature of this stupendous task, aside from the manner of its execution, demands serious and respectful consideration. It is not to be denied that this important event was so considered in the daily press. Yet it is also apparent that there is a difference between the attitude of the bourgeois press when a native artist, living in our midst, does his task with high craftsmanship but self-effacing mien, and the treatment accorded loudly-acclaimed, glamorous appearances of a no-more-competent artist hailing from Paris or London.

Needless to say (and fortunately as well) this recital did not attract a fashionable audience, but a near-capacity house composed primarily of musicians and serious students of music, who demonstrated by rapt attention and warm applause their awareness of the significance of the occasion and their deep appreciation of the profound interpenetration existing throughout the program in the relation of the creator and re-creator of this amazing music.

Bach, when understandingly played, never ceases to astonish by the enormous vitality and scope of his expression. This is not only true because of the living quality of his form, but because of the great diversity and character of his subject matter. That this is not apparent to so many, is due to the false and one-sided tradition with which Bach is associated in the conventional lay mind. Usually approached by students from compulsion, because his works are a part of every music school curriculum, taught by dry-as-dust pedants who often preserve the false Czerny tradition of Bach (reprinted by Schirmer in this country), too many have come to look upon Bach as a necessary evil. Equally false has been the more recent and much-used Busoni "editing" of Bach, which, all too frequently, endeavors to inject fresh interest and life by the "doubling" of voices as well as other alterations and modernizations.

When an occasional attempt is made to understand the essential spirit of Bach, we find him usually enshrouded with the halo of religious feeling. It is true that he possessed this feeling with a high degree of conviction and intensity, yet this "explanation" of Bach is one which fails to elucidate his many-sidedness.

The truth is—and how manifest on the present occasion—that Bach was always close to the soil, a "worker-musician," earning his livelihood in the church, it is true, but close to all phases of the lives of the people. This is reflected time and again in simple direct terms, in music which is characteristic of the gay dances and humor, as well as more serious aspects, of the daily lives of the masses of his period—a far cry from the ecclesiastical spirit which necessarily permeates his religious works. Bach amazes us as an observer of humanity, one with the people. Rooted in a long tradition, "form" in his hands did not degenerate into mere formalism; it became a flexible medium which he changed and expanded as the nature of the occasion demanded.

It would be pedantic to cavil at an occasional dryness and harshness in Friskin's tone. He not only succeeded in conveying the frank humor and zest of many of the lighter preludes and fugues, but also plumbed the depths of such a profound fugue as that in *D sharp minor.* ASHLEY PETTIS.

What Happened to Stravinsky?

THE audience that heard Klemperer perform *The Fire Bird* and the *Symphony of Psalms* (October 21, Carnegie Hall) listened to the story of Stravinsky's devolution. Written in 1910, *The Fire Bird* was an exquisite weaving of scraps of folk music. Stravinsky had dexterously recreated one phase of Russian folk lore: the magical and wondrous.

Since 1910, however, his music has lost the delicate balance necessary to it: it has become chiefly craftsmanship. This lopsidedness was indicated in *The Rites of Spring;* it is the ruin of the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930).

Dedicating the work "to the glory of God," Stravinsky resorts to the old reliable—The Bible—for the requisite awe and wonder; specifically to three psalms.

But he fails to realize that the Hebrew psalms are no universal medium for provoking awe in every man, woman and child but the folk-product of a particular people in a particular historical period. To make out of such stuff authentically moving music, the idiom and attitude of the particular folk-product must be recreated (as in Bloch's *Trois Poèmes Juifs.*) But to his text Stravinsky brought not much more than a technical dexterity and an array of formal devices whose configuration is disarming—refreshing departures in orchestration; no violins, no clarinets in the wind section, a chorus of children's voices, metronomic instead of the conventional time markings, etc. The imposing tumult amounts to so much ineffectual fury. There is frenzy but no passion, tautness but no consistent intensity, variety but no color.

The Stravinsky coterie in Paris continues to speak in awe-struck tones about this "great work" whose emotion is synthetic, whose impact upon the listener is tangential. It would be more reasonable to use terms of regret. How else speak of a composer of enormous gifts and proved achievement who has abandoned the basis of his finest work—the Russian folk—who has ignored the huge potentialities in the regeneration of this people, and who now wastes his talents in the furious creation of sterile variations on God?

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

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The Beauty of Poverty

POVERTY is a beautiful thing. It doesn't matter that you live in a "Cabbage Patch" in a dilapidated shanty that would make a Hooverville dwelling look like a Hollywood bungalow. It also doesn't matter that five children (one of them dying of tuberculosis) and their mother have to live on dishwater-stew. As a matter of fact they should be thankful for even that much. It doesn't matter, because there is always the wealthy, young and beautiful lady who will come around each Thanksgiving Day and give you a nice big Turkey with all the trimmings. And then there is that nice young man, Mr. Bob, who will take the sick boy to the hospital so that he may die in a nice prophylactic bed. And then if the nasty landlord should want to kick you off your land (the railroad is going to run their line through the place) because you haven't the $25.00 for the last payment on the mortgage, don't let that make you sad. There is still the nice, clean, rich young fella who will come across in the nick of time to save the old homestead.

If you haven't guessed it, this is the message, the moral, of Paramount's translation of the literary classic *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch.* If you are strict about classification, it is a comedy. For it was produced by Douglas McLean, ex-comedian, who like Raymond Griffith has turned producer; it has in its cast Zazu Pitts and that genial comedian, W. C. Fields. But if you really want to know, it's chock full of propaganda. The credit for that remarkable discovery must go to a group of educators headed by Dr. Howard Le Sourd, Dean of the Graduate School of Boston University. This Committee on Social Values in Motion Pictures which functions through the Hays office, reports that: "Mrs. Wiggs' patience in the face of adversity is the great outstanding lesson of the film." And it seems that he is in perfect agreement with Hitler in that "the homely and ancient virtue of being a good cook . . . has a bearing on the development of character." My, my, all this fuss, when Mr. P. S. Harrison, of Harrison's Reports (confidential advice on movies) labels Mrs. Wiggs as "good for children, adolescents, and Sundays."

PETER ELLIS.

Other Current Films

Now and Forever (Paramount): Shirley Temple again. She sings, dances, repeats her lines cutely and reforms gangsters and con men. Pollyanna with a dash of crime.

Little Friend (Gaumont-British): The English continue to invade the American market and are still trying to solve the divorce problem. However, this film contains a new child actor who is older than Shirley Temple; and better. Her portrayal of a child fustrated by stupid parents who insist on breaking up the family has dignity and charm. The pattern of this English film is influenced by that remarkable French film of last year *Poil de Carotte.*

The Last Gentleman (United Artists): George Arliss continues to cackle, frown, shout, and annoy.

The Age of Innocence (RKO-Radio): RKO imported Philip Moeller, Theatre Guild director, hoping for another Mamoulian. The result was another escape into the mauve decade done in the stock RKO manner.

Deserter (Mejrabpomfilm-Garrison): Pudovkin's first sound film and the most important Soviet movie since the silent classics. A stirring and dynamic film no one can afford to miss.

P. E.

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Between Ourselves

THE request made in this column for volunteers to help in the promotion work of the magazine has produced excellent results. Together with the forces mobilized by the Friends of THE NEW MASSES, these volunteers, many of them outstanding experts in their fields, are tackling very seriously the task of increasing the magazine's circulation.

And the promotion work is now being extended to other cities. Allan Taub, International Labor Defense attorney, who has been active in the Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, is now on his way to Chicago to establish the midwest headquarters of THE NEW MASSES. For the past month Taub has been at work helping to build up the New York promotion forces; from now on Evelyn Schloss will co-ordinate the work of volunteers in the New York promotion campaign.

Meetings are being arranged for Taub in various midwest cities to discuss plans for widening the distribution of the magazine. The first of these will be held in Cleveland, Tuesday evening, November 13, at the Greek Cultural Center, 2023 Prospect Avenue. On Friday evening, November 16, Taub will meet readers of THE NEW MASSES in Detroit at the John Reed Club, 108 West Hancock Street. There will be no admission charge at either of these meetings; there will be no collection.

John L. Spivak will speak at the following meetings arranged through THE NEW MASSES Lecture Bureau: Monday evening, November 12, at the Far Rockaway Jewish Center, Central Avenue, Far Rockaway; Wednesday evening, November 14, at the Allerton Workers' Club, 683 Allerton Avenue, the Bronx; Thursday evening, November 15 in Philadelphia, at the Broadway Arena, Broad and Christian Streets, under the auspices of the International Labor Defense; Friday evening, November 16, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; Saturday evening, November 17, in Newark, at the Y. M. H. A., at High and Kinney Streets; Sunday afternoon, November 18, at the Central Opera House, 67th Street and Third Avenue; Monday evening, November 19, at Paradise Manor, 11 West Mt. Eden Avenue, the Bronx.

There are no further lecture dates available for Spivak at this time.

Next week in commemoration of the fourteenth anniversary of the death of Joe Hill, well-known Wobbly poet, THE NEW MASSES will publish a long poem by Kenneth Patchen, young revolutionary poet. We believe that *Joe Hill Listens to the Praying* is not only one of the outstanding poems by an American revolutionary poet but a fitting tribute to the memorable working-class martyr who was framed and executed in Salt Lake City, November 19, 1915.

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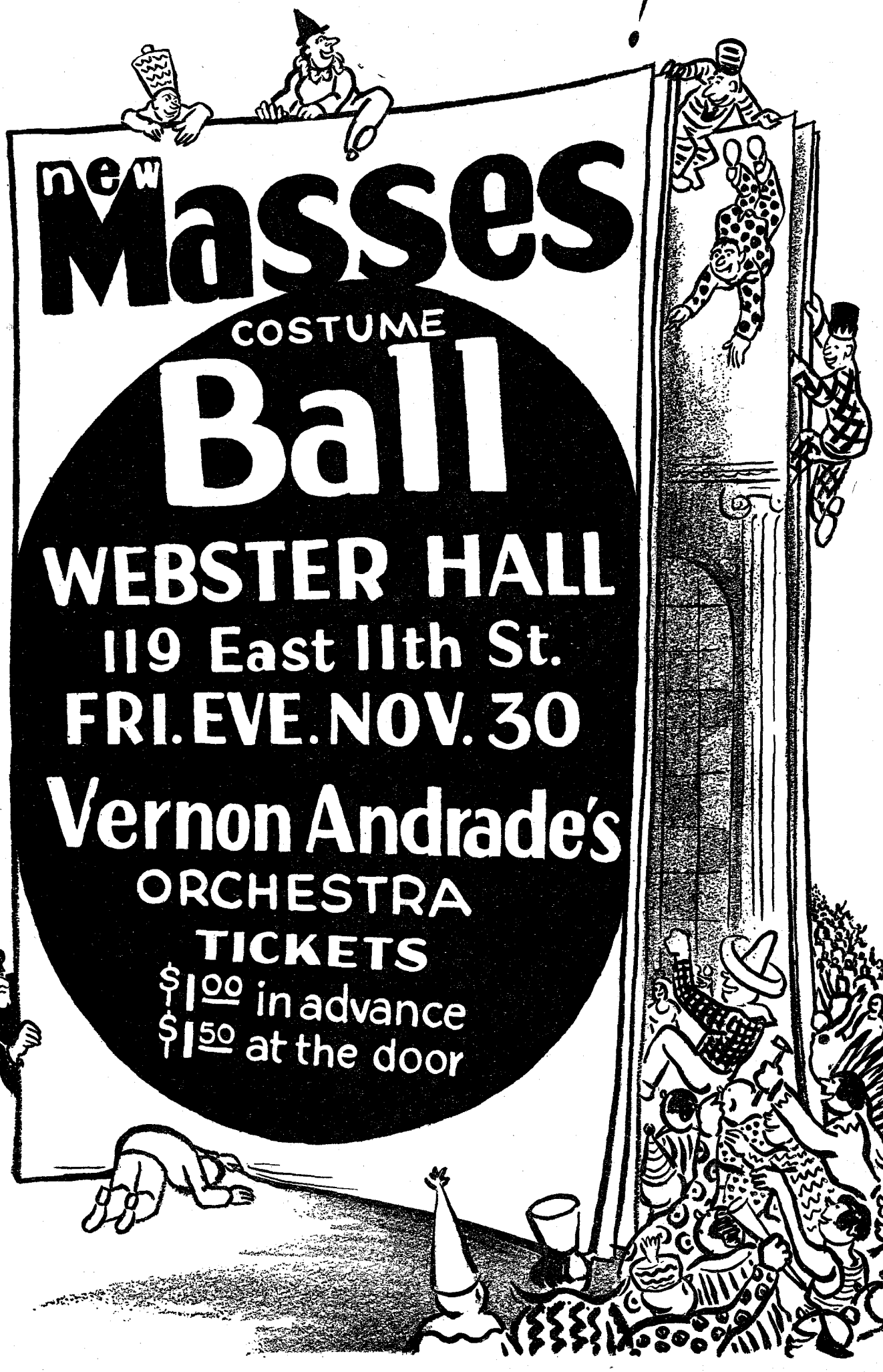

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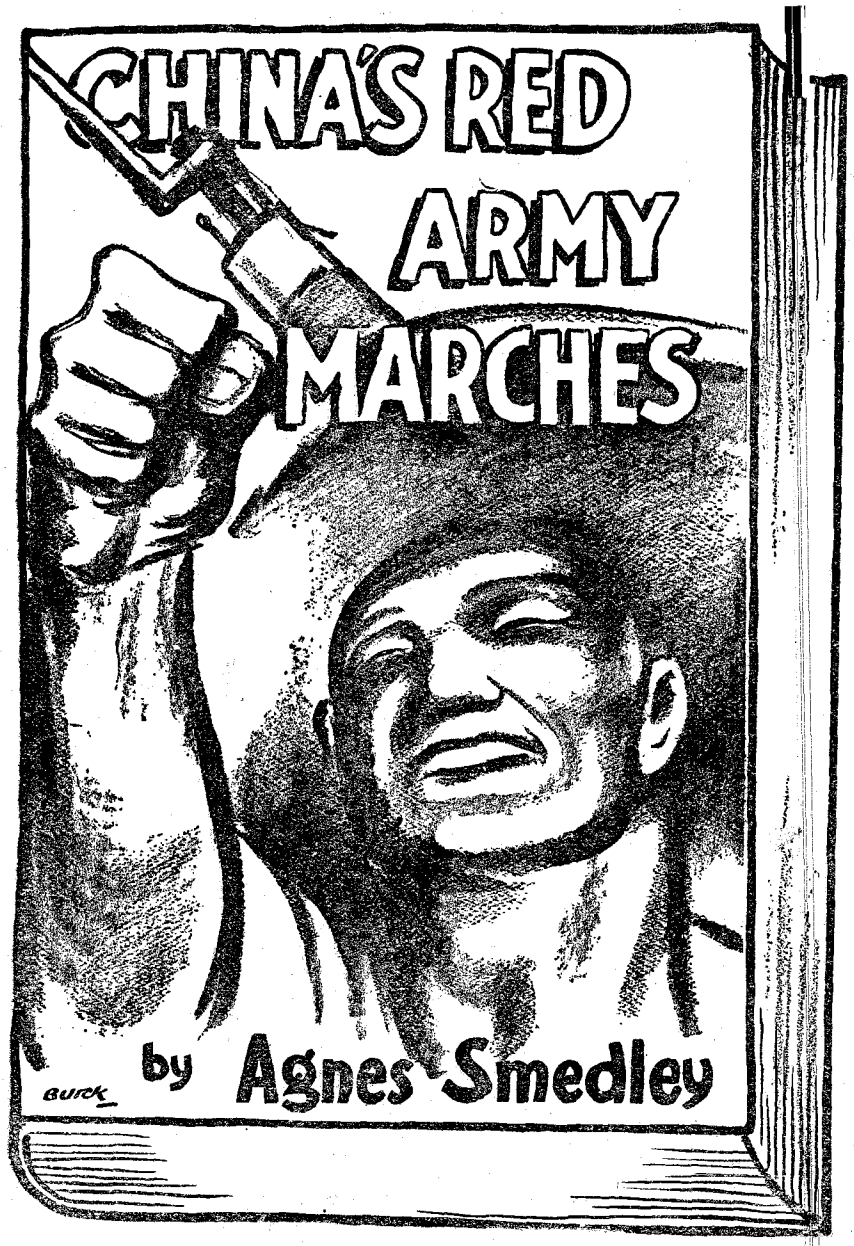

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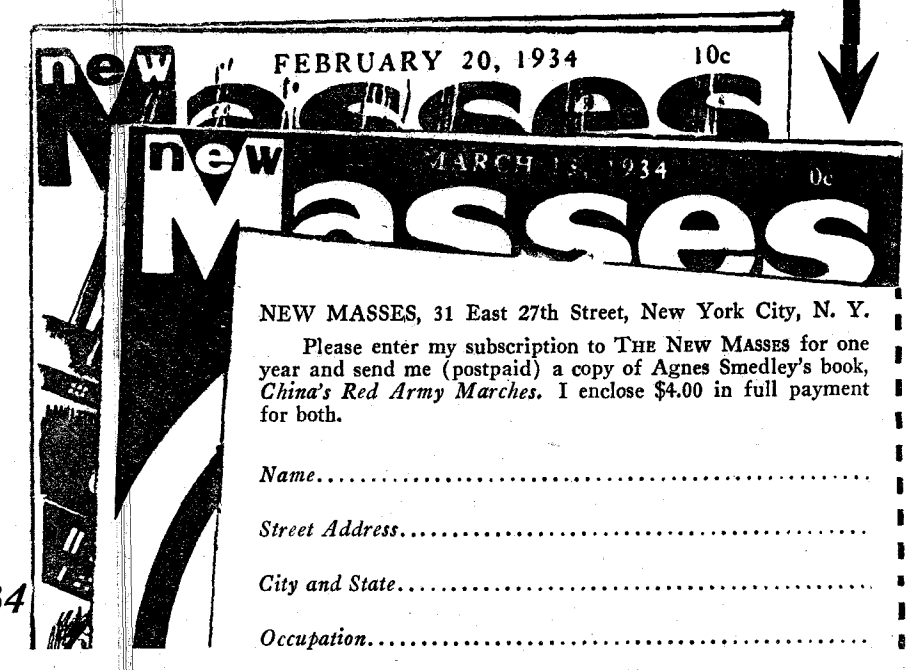

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